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THE

LIFE AND TRAVELS

OF

HERODOTUS

IN THE

FIFTH CENTURY BEFORE CHRIST:

AN IMAGINARY BIOGRAPHY FOUNDED ON FACT,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE

HISTORY, MANNERS, RELIGION, LITERATURE, ARTS, AND SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE GREEKS, EGYPTIANS, PERSIANS, BABYLONIANS, HEBREWS, SCYTHIANS, AND OTHER ANCIENT NATIONS, IN THE DAYS OF PERICLES AND NEHEMIAH.

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BY

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CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

CHAPTER XXV.

SCYTHIA, B.C. 459.

Scythians of Southern Russia and the Crimea.—Their Mongolian Origin.—The great Grass Steppe of Southern Russia.—Anciently occupied by the Cimmerians.—Migration of the Scythians to the Grass Steppe.—Pursue the Cimmerians into Asia.—Obtain the Rule in Upper Asia.—Return to the Grass Steppe.—Fight their Slaves with Horsewhips.—Herodotus lodges in Olbia.—First Impressions of the Scythians.—Timnes, the Scythian Commissioner.—Nomade Life.—Scythian Religion.—Mode of sacrificing.—Human Sacrifices to the Sword of Ares.—Ferocious War Customs of the Scythians.—Mode of divining.—Punishment of False Soothsayers.—Funeral Rites.—Royal Barrows.—Intoxicating Smoke.—Blood-thirsty Tauri of the Crimea - - - - Page 1

CHAP. XXVI.

SCYTHIA (CONTINUED), B.C. 459.

Severity of the Scythian Winter.—Herodotus removes to Byzantium.—Scythian Prejudice against Foreign Customs.—Story of Anacharsis the Scythian, who was put to death for celebrating the Orgies of Cybele.—Story of Scylas, who was put to death for celebrating the Orgies of Dionysus.—Scythian Myth concerning their own Origin.—Story of Targitaus.—Greek Tradition of the Origin of the Scythians.—Story of Heracles and his Serpent Wife.—Story of the Invasion of Scythia by Darius Hystaspis, and the terrible Retreat - - - - - - 17

CHAP. XXVII.

NATIONS BORDERING ON SCYTHIA, B.C. 459.

Population of Scythia.—Story of the huge Brazen Cauldron made of Arrow Heads.—Rich Savages of Transylvania.—Wolf-men occupying Poland.—Cannibals in Central Russia.—Strange Story of the Scythians and Amazons: settlement of their Descendants in Astracan and the Country of the Don Cossacks.—Savage Tribes of the Caucasus.—Caravan Route between the Black Sea and Siberia and the Khirgis Steppe.—Otter and Beaver Hunters.—Strange Wooden City of Gelonus.—Hunters of the Ural.—Traditionary Account of the Calmucks.—People who always ate their Parents.—Massagetæ of the Khirgis Steppe.—Strange Manners.—Expedition of Cyrus the Great against the Massagetæ.—Dim Geographical Traditions - - - - - Page 34

CHAP. XXVIII.

ATHENS, B.C. 458.

Herodotus lands at the Piræus.—The great Dionysia.—Joyous Celebration of the Festival.—The Procession of Bacchanals.—Herodotus falls suddenly in Love.—His Thoughts upon the Subject.—Banquet in the House of Euphorion.—Tragedies to be performed in the great Stone Theatre of Dionysus.—Athenian Tragedies.—The Oresteia of Æschylus.—Origin and Character of the ancient Greek Drama.—Theatrical Machines.—Character of the Actors and Choruses.—Structure and Arrangement of the ancient Theatre—Mode of Performance.—Herodotus's Studies in the ancient Drama - - - - - - - 48

CHAP. XXIX.

ATHENIAN THEATRE, B.C. 458.

Gathering of the Athenian People to the great Stone Theatre of Dionysus.—Prices of Admission.—No Playbills required.—Trilogy of the Oresteia founded on the Legends connected with the House of Atreus at Mycenæ.—Story of Agamemnon and Clytæmnestra.—Arrangement of the Oresteia.—Development of the Plot.—Detailed Description of the Performance of the Three Tragedies, Agamemnon, Chœphoræ, and Eumenides - - - 60

CHAP. XXX.

ATHENS, B.C. 458.

Conclusion of the Performances in the Theatre. — Satirical Drama of Proteus. — Impression upon Herodotus. — Festival of the great Panathenæa. — Character of the Festivities. — The Lampadephoria, or Torch Race. — Origin of the Torch Race. — Schemes of Euphorion in reference to Herodotus. — Grand Procession from the Cerameicus to the Acropolis. — Herodotus desires Initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries. — Preparations at the Lesser Eleusinia. — Temple Legend of Demeter and Persephone, and the Origin of the Mysteries at Eleusis. — Meaning of the Legend. — Solemnities of the Great Eleusinia. — Procession along the Sacred Way. — Awful Ceremonies of Initiation. — Untimely Levity - Page 79

CHAP. XXXI.

GREEK RELIGION. ATHENS, B.C. 458.

Changes in the Religious Ideas and Belief of the ancient Greeks between the Times of Hesiod and Herodotus, B.C. 750—458. — Review of the Orthodox Faith as laid down by Hesiod. — Ideas of Hesiod concerning the Origin of the Human Race. — The Golden Race. — The Silver Race. — The Brazen Race. — The Heroic Race. — The Iron Race. — The Ideas of Hesiod concerning a Future State. — Modifications of the Hesiodic Ideas in the Time of Herodotus. — Changes produced by the Mysteries of Eleusis. — Changes produced by the Orgies of Dionysus and Cybele. — The Teachings of Pythagoras. — The Orphic Societies. — Legendary Account of Orpheus. — Worship of Dionysus-Zagreus. — Higher and more hopeful Views of Death. — Age of Orphic Literature. — Orphic Theogony. — Difference between the Hesiodic and the Orphic Ideas. — Legend of Dionysus-Zagreus. — General Reformation throughout the ancient Heathen World in the Sixth Century B.C. - - - - - - - - - 98

CHAP. XXXII.

ATHENS AND CYRENE, B.C. 458—457.

Herodotus's Melancholy. — Preparations for a Voyage to Egypt. — A startling Discovery connected with Herodotus's Love Affair. — Embarkation — Voyage to Crete. — A Storm. — A Difficulty connected with the Wine Skins. — Herodotus's Appearance in the

Character of a Chthonian Deity.—Fair Weather.—Arrival at Cyrene.—Natural Beauties of the Country.—Mythic Traditions connected with the Colonisation of Cyrene.—Minyans descended from the Argonaut Sailors and Lemnian Ladies.—Atrocities at Lemnos.—Minyans settled at Sparta.—Colonisation of Thera.—Theræan Tradition of the Colonisation of Cyrene.—Cyrenæan Tradition - - - - - - - Page 116

CHAP. XXXIII.

EGYPT, B.C. 457—455.

Voyage from Cyrene to Egypt.—Geography of Egypt.—Inundation of the Nile.—Appearance of the Egyptians.—Dress and Usages.—Troubles in Egypt occasioned by the Revolt of Inarus.—Athenians and Egyptians under Inarus capitulate to the Persians.—Herodotus winters at Naucratis, the Trading City.—Sais.—Temple of Neith, and Palace and Burial-place of the Pharaohs.—Rock Chamber.—Tomb of Osiris.—Festival of Burning Lamps.—Buto.—Temple of Horus, on a Floating Island.—Busiris.—Papremis.—Extraordinary Ceremonies in the Temple of Typhon.—Bubastis.—Beautiful Temple of Pasht.—Festival of the Goddess.—Heliopolis.—Story of King Pheron.—Picture and Story of the Phœnix.—Physical Geography of the Delta.—Canals.—Egyptian Castes.—Food of the Egyptians.—Art of Medicine.—Antique Customs.—Ancient Dirge called Maneros.—Mournings for the Dead.—Embalming.—Egyptian Writing - - - - - 135

CHAP. XXXIV.

EGYPT, B.C. 455.

Voyage from Naucratis to Memphis.—Tradition of the Foundation of Memphis.—Magnificent Temple of Pthah.—Propylæa and Court for Apis.—Statue of King Sethon and a Mouse.—Pyramids of Gizeh.—Ancient History of Egypt.—Annals of Manetho.—Stories of the Priests of Pthah.—Feat of Nitocris.—Conquests of Sesostris.—Traditions of his Reign.—Extraordinary Story of the Treasure-Chamber of Rampsinitus.—A Game at Dice in Hades.—Stories of the Pyramid Kings.—Account of Cheops and Description of his Pyramid.—Pyramids of Chephren and Mycerinus.—Story of Mycerinus's Daughter.—Singular Oracle concerning his Death.—Appearance of the Pyramids in the Time of Herodotus.—Mummy Case and Bones of Mycerinus in the British Museum.—Pyramid of Bricks - - - - - - 156

CHAP. XXXV.

HISTORY OF EGYPT, ANTE 455 B.C.

History of the Kings of Egypt connected with the Kings of Judah and Israel. — Shishak. — Story of Sabacon of the Dynasty of Tirhaka. — Priest-King Sethon. — Invasion of Sennacherib. — Connexions with the Court of Hezekiah.—Story of the Government of Twelve Kings. — Psammitichus. — Pharaoh-Necho. — Circumnavigation of Africa. — Defeat and Death of King Josiah. — Necho defeated by Nebuchadnezzar. — Reign of Apries, the Pharaoh-Hophra of Scripture.—Deposed by Amasis. — Anecdotes of the merry Reign of Amasis.—Traditionary Accounts of the Causes of the Persian Invasion. — Story of Phanes. — Conquest of Egypt by Cambyses. — Pathetic Story.—Mad Acts of Cambyses. — Failure of his Three Expeditions. — Appearance of Apis.—Death of Cambyses. —After History of Egypt - - - - Page 175

CHAP. XXXVI.

UPPER EGYPT, B.C. 454.

Voyage up the Nile to Thebes. — Egyptian River Craft. — Lake Mœris. — The Labyrinth. — Present Remains of the Labyrinth.— Imposing Appearance of Thebes. — Herodotus's Initiation into the Mysteries of Osiris and Isis.—Religious Character of the Egyptians. —Egyptian Deities. — Worship of Osiris.— Doctrine of the Transmigration and Immortality of Souls. — Connexion between Osiris and Dionysus-Zagreus, and between Isis and the Chthonian Demeter.—Story told by the Priestesses of Zeus at Dodona.—Herodotus' fixed Opinions of the Gods. — Absurd Mistakes of the Greeks. — Real Antiquity of the Gods. — Egyptian Worship of Animals. — Colleges for their Support. — Sacred Crocodiles. — Sneering of the Greeks, and sublime prophetical Denunciations of Holy Writ.—Egyptian Religion a Corruption of the pure Worship of God - - - - - - - - 195

CHAP. XXXVII.

ETHIOPIA, ARABIA, AND PHŒNICIA, B.C. 454.

Voyage from Thebes to Elephantine. — Herodotus's Inquiries concerning the Inundation of the Nile. — Theory which referred it to the Etesian Winds. — Theory which referred it to Melted Snow. —

Theory which referred it to the River Ocean.—Theory of Herodotus, that it was caused by the North Winds, which blew the Sun towards the South.—Real Cause.—Absurd Story of the Registrar at Sais.—Inquiries about Ethiopia.—Geography.—Upper Course of the Nile.—Traditions concerning the Ethiopians.—Envoys sent by Cambyses.—Golden Fetters.—Table of the Sun.—Crystal Sepulchres.—Crocodiles.—Mode of Catching them.—Nile supposed to be like the Danube.—Ancient Expedition of five Nasamonians through the Sahara Desert to Timbuctoo.—Herodotus's Return Voyage to Memphis.—Religious Doubts.—Herodotus proceeds to Tyre in Phœnicia.—The Philistines.—Desert of Arabia Petræa.—Strange Story of the Conveyance of Water over the Desert.—The Jews of Palestine.—The Phœnicians or Canaanites.—Commercial Enterprise of the Sidonians and Tyrians.—Hiram and Jezebel.—History of Tyre.—Appearance of the City.—Temple of Melcarth, the Heracles of the Greeks and Baal of the Hebrews.—Antiquity of the God - - - - - Page 216

CHAP. XXXVIII.

HALICARNASSUS, B.C. 453.

Herodotus's Return to Halicarnassus.—State of Political Affairs.—Projected Marriage of Herodotus with Phædra.—Opposition of Herodotus.—Anxiety of his Mother Dryo.—Awful Discovery.—Herodotus becomes reconciled to Circumstances.—Interview with Artemisia.—A new House.—A Betrothal.—Character of Greek Lovers.—Preliminary Sacrifices.—A Greek Wedding - 236

CHAP. XXXIX.

HALICARNASSUS, B.C. 453—448. LYDIAN HISTORY, ANTE 448 B.C.

Five Years of Happiness.—Death of Pisindelis.—Preparations for a Journey to Susa.—Herodotus proceeds to Sardis.—Lydian History.—Conquests of Crœsus.—Story of Bias.—Visit of Solon at the Lydian Court.—Who is the Happiest of Mankind?—Story of Tellus.—Story of Cleobis and Bion.—Wisdom of Solon.—Crœsus Afflicted by the Avenging Nemesis.—Purification of Adrastus.—Loss of his Son Atys.—Prepares for War against Cyrus and the Persians.—Crœsus consults the Oracles.—Story of the Present sent by the Spartans.—Anecdote of Alcmæon.—His Golden Appearance before Crœsus.—War against Persia.—Advice of Sandanis.—Prodigy of Serpents.—Sardis taken by Cyrus.—Overthrow of the Lydian Power.—Story of Crœsus and his Dumb Son.—

Crœsus saved by Apollo from being sacrificed to the Gods.—His Advice to Cyrus.—Reproaches the Oracle at Delphi.—Discovers his Error.—After Life of Crœsus - - - Page 248

CHAP. XL.

SARDIS AND BABYLON, B.C. 448—447.

How the Lydians became luxurious.—Lydian Revolt from Cyrus.—Advice of Crœsus.—Warlike Spirit of Lydia effectually destroyed.—Story of the Arrest of Pactyas.—Story of Aristodicus and the Oracle of Branchidæ.—Description of Sardis.—Customs of the Lydians.—Their Inventions.—Immense Tumulus of Alyattes.—Monument of Sesóstris.—Royal Road to Susa.—Persian System of Post.—Voyage down the River Euphrates to Babylon.—Singular Make of the Armenian Boats.—Wonderful Harvests of Babylonia.—Magnificence and Luxury of Babylon.—Appearance of the City and People.—Stupendous Walls and Brazen Gates.—Moveable Bridges over the Euphrates.—Royal Palace of Nebuchadnezzar.—Immense Temple of Belus.—Birs Nimroud.—Tower of Babel.—Sepulchre of Nitocris.—Singular Matrimonial Auctions - - - - - - - 271

CHAP. XLI.

ASSYRIAN, BABYLONIAN, AND MEDIAN HISTORY, ANTE B.C. 550.

Character of the great Asiatic Empires.—The old Assyrian Empire.—Mission of Jonah, B.C. 862.—Funeral Pile of Sardanapalus.—Nineveh taken by Arbaces the Mede and Belesis the Babylonian, about B.C. 820.—Second Assyrian Empire under the Medo-Assyrian Dynasty of Arbacidæ.—Pul, Tiglath-Pileser, Shalmaneser and Sennacherib.—Destruction of the Second Assyrian Empire by the Medes, B.C. 606.—History of Babylon.—Nabonassar, Merodach Baladan, and Nebuchadnezzar.—History of Media.—Republican Government of Judgeships.—Establishment of the Monarchy by Deioces, B.C. 711.—Building of Ecbatana.—Court Ceremonial.—Phraortes, B.C. 647.—Cyaxares, B.C. 625.—Expels the Scythians—Takes Nineveh.—Astyages, B.C. 585.—History and Condition of the Persian Highlanders.—Story of the Marriage of Mandane, the Median Princess, with Cambyses, the Persian Chieftain.—Dreams of Astyages.—Attempt to assassinate the Infant Cyrus.—Romantic Story of his Preservation.—Discovery made by Astyages.—His Revenge.—Popularity of Cyrus in Persia.—Letter from Harpagus.—Cyrus excites the Persian Chiefs to revolt.—Defeat of Astyages, and Establishment of the Medo-Persian Empire by Cyrus, B.C. 550 - - - - 288

CHAP. XLII.

HISTORY OF PERSIA, B.C. 550—523.

Conquests of Cyrus. — Story of the Piper and the Fishes. — Subjugation of the Asiatic Greeks. — Expedition against Belshazzar, King of Babylon. — Siege and Capture of Babylon. — Edict of Cyrus for the Restoration of the Jews, B.C. 536. — Cambyses, B.C. 530. — Revolt of the Median Magians. — Ancient Idolatry. — The Sabæan or Image Worship. — The Magian or Fire Worship. — Doctrines of Zoroaster the Reformer. — Heretical Practices of the Median Magians. — Contest between the Heretical Party of Magians and the Reformed Party of Zoroaster. — Cyrus the Persian, the Leader of the Reformed Party. — Cambyses, a zealous Persecutor of the Median Heretics. — Story of Smerdis, the Brother of Cambyses. — Revolt of the Medes under Smerdis the Magian. — Cambyses leaves Egypt for Susa. — His Last Words. — Death of Ecbatana in Syria, B.C. 523 - - - - Page 306

CHAP. XLIII.

HISTORY OF PERSIA, B.C. 523—447.

Reign of Smerdis the Magian. — Discovery of the Imposture. — Conspiracy of the Seven. — Energy of Darius Hystaspis. — Last Speech and Suicide of Prexaspes. — Smerdis and his Brother slain. — Massacre of the Magians. — Accession of Darius to the Persian Throne, B.C. 523. — Subversion of the Magian Heresy. — Religious Toleration. — Babylonian Revolt. — Nineteen Months' Siege. — Desperate Scheme of Zopyrus. — Babylon taken by Darius. — Empire of Darius. — Greece. — Story of the Greek Surgeon, Democedes of Crotona. — His extraordinary Adventures. — Residence at Susa. — Intrigues to be sent to Greece as a Spy. — Escapes to Crotona. — Ionian Revolt, B.C. 503-498. — Battle of Marathon, B.C. 490. — Preparations for a grand Expedition against Greece. — Dispute concerning the Succession. — Death of Darius, B.C. 485. — Accession of Xerxes. — Leads an immense Army against Greece. — Appearance of the Host during the March. — Tears of Xerxes. — Failure of the Expedition. — Death of Xerxes, B.C. 465. — Accession of Artaxerxes Longimanus - - - - - 323

CHAP. XLIV.

SUSA AND PERSEPOLIS, B.C. 447—446.

Herodotus reaches Susa. — Situation of Pasargada and Persepolis. — Garden and Parklike Scenery. — Present Remains of Persepolis. —

Herodotus proceeds to Persepolis.—Magnificent Edifices.—Description of the Palaces of Persepolis.—Terraces and Steps.—Winged Bulls.—Arrow-head Inscription.—Birthday of Artaxerxes.—Sacrifices to the Rising Sun.—Hall of Xerxes.—Appearance of King Artaxerxes.—Birthday Presents.—Royal Banquet.—Herodotus receives a Median Dress.—Audience with the Great King in the Hall of Hundred Columns.—Herodotus accompanies his Mission.—Manners and Customs of the Persians.—Respect for Valour.—Story of Artayntes.—Education of Boys.—Punishment of Unjust Judges.—Increasing Luxury of the Persians.—Religious Rites and Ceremonies.—Magian Practices.—Funerals.—Description of the Tomb of Cyrus at Pasargada.—Persian Ideas of the Soul after Death.—Resurrection of the Dead - Page 344

CHAP. XLV.

SUSA AND JERUSALEM, B.C. 446—445.

Herodotus's Interviews with Nehemiah.—State of the Hebrew Nation.—Caravans of Zerubbabel and Ezra.—Character of Nehemiah.—Curiosity of Herodotus concerning the Hebrew People.—Discourse of Nehemiah.—Hebrew Religion and Hebrew History.—Story of Queen Esther and Haman the Amalekite.—Herodotus accompanies Nehemiah to Jerusalem.—Lebanon, Hermon, and Tabor.—River Jordan.—Condition of the Inhabitants of Jerusalem.—Herodotus proceeds over Jerusalem.—Description of the City.—Thoughts of Herodotus.—Meditations of Nehemiah on the Desolation of Jerusalem.—Prophetical Glimpses of the Future 362

CHAP. XLVI.

HALICARNASSUS, B.C. 445—444.

Herodotus returns to Halicarnassus.—Pestilence.—Fears of the Avenging Nemesis.—Sorrow and Affliction.—State of Political Affairs at Halicarnassus.—Herodotus returns to Political Life.—Writes to the Persian Satrap.—Character of Lygdamis, the Tyrant of Halicarnassus.—Herodotus's Interview with him.—Anxious Thoughts.—Strange Recognition.—Effects of Bribery.—A Revolution.—Jealousy of Factions.—Attempted Assassination.—Herodotus leaves Halicarnassus for ever - - - 383

CHAP. XLVII.

THURIUM, B.C. 443—427.

Herodotus's Retirement at Thurium.—His Meditations upon the Past.—Envy of the Gods.—Compiles his great History of the

Persian War.—Epic Character of the History.—Scope and Contents of the History.—Herodotus the Homer of History.—A Second Marriage - - - - - - Page 398

CHAP. XLVIII.

ATHENS, B.C. 427.

Herodotus determines to pay a last Visit to Athens.—The Establishment of the Athenian Empire.—Athens in all her Glory.—Hospitality of old Captain Phylarchus.—Pleasant Discourse.—Marvellous Representations of the Gods of Hellas.—Genius of Phidias.—The Odeium.—The Theatre.—Sophocles.—Aristophanes.—The Acropolis.—Temple of Wingless Victory.—The Propylæa.—Bronze Statue of Athena Promachos.—The Parthenon.—Statue of Athena Parthenos of Gold and Ivory.—The Erechtheium.—A Dream 411

CHAP. XLIX.

CONCLUSION.

Herodotus's Return to Thurium.—Egyptian Linens and Babylonian Cottons.—Evening Readings.—Character of Herodotus's Listeners.—Old Age and its Infirmities.—Death.—Funeral Ceremonies.—Funeral Orations - - - - - - 424

LIFE AND TRAVELS

OF

HERODOTUS.

CHAPTER XXV.

SCYTHIA, B. C. 459.

SCYTHIANS OF SOUTHERN RUSSIA AND THE CRIMEA — THEIR MONGOLIAN ORIGIN. — THE GREAT GRASS STEPPE OF SOUTHERN RUSSIA. — ANCIENTLY OCCUPIED BY THE CIMMERIANS. — MIGRATION OF THE SCYTHIANS TO THE GRASS STEPPE. — PURSUE THE CIMMERIANS INTO ASIA. — OBTAIN THE RULE IN UPPER ASIA. — RETURN TO THE GRASS STEPPE. — FIGHT THEIR SLAVES WITH HORSEWHIPS. — HERODOTUS LODGES IN OLBIA. — FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE SCYTHIANS. — TIMNES, THE SCYTHIAN COMMISSIONER. — NOMADE LIFE. — SCYTHIAN RELIGION. — MODE OF SACRIFICING. — HUMAN SACRIFICES TO THE SWORD OF ARES. — FEROCIOUS WAR CUSTOMS OF THE SCYTHIANS. — MODE OF DIVINING. — PUNISHMENT OF FALSE SOOTHSAYERS. — FUNERAL RITES. — ROYAL BARROWS. — INTOXICATING SMOKE. — BLOODTHIRSTY TAURI OF THE CRIMEA.

In the time of Herodotus, the whole of that extensive territory of Southern Russia, which stretches from the mouths of the Danube eastward to the Sea of Azoff and river Don, was inhabited by a race of Mongol Tartars, known to the Greek world by the name of Scythians. The form and features of the Scythian people would have been sufficient to denote their Mongolian origin. The thick and flat flesh which covered and disguised the forms of their muscles and bones, their round faces and skulls,

and the peculiar cut of their eyes, would have convinced the most casual observer that they belonged to the same stock as the wild hordes of Tartars who still wander through the vast steppes of Northern and Central Asia; whilst their filthy habits, their drunkenness, their tents of felt, and their nomade lives, spent chiefly on horseback, would have fully confirmed the impression which the first glance could scarcely have failed to awaken.

The country itself may be described as a grass steppe, supplying good pasture for cattle and horses, and in its eastern quarter producing excellent wheat and all kinds of grain, together with great quantities of flax and hemp. It was, therefore, admirably adapted to the habits and requirements of a Tartar race. But the circumstances which led to that great Tartar migration from the rich pastures round the Sea of Aral to the Grass Steppe on the northern shore of the Euxine could not fail to excite the curiosity of the early philosophic traveller. The national traditions, however, which the Scythians themselves preserved, and those which prevailed amongst the Greek colonists on the shores of the Black Sea, were generally rejected by the more acute critics of olden time; and though we shall have occasion to produce them as specimens of ancient historic myths, yet we would more particularly direct the reader's attention to the following account, which was the most generally received both by the Greeks and the other literary nations of the ancient world.

About two or three centuries before the time of Herodotus, the great level between the Danube and the Don was inhabited by an almost unknown race, named the Cimmerians; whilst the Scythians themselves wandered about the rich pastures of Asia on the north and east of the Sea of Aral. At this time a war was being carried on between the Scythians and another Mongolian race known as the Massagetæ. The Scythians, being greatly

harassed, at last determined on an extensive migration; and accordingly took their families and their cattle, their horses and their tents, in a north-westerly direction over the river Volga, until they approached the river Don and the Cimmerian territory. The Cimmerians were terrified at beholding a vast army of wild horsemen, who had thus thrown off the indolent stupor which characterises the ordinary routine of Mongolian life, and were pouring over the Don with the same feverish energy and mad impetuosity which, in after times, carried the Tartar and the Turk to Bagdad and Byzantium. The great body of the Cimmerian people refused to hazard a battle against such overwhelming odds. In vain their chiefs urged them not to abandon their country, but to fight to the last against the robber-like invaders. The people threw off their allegiance, and prepared for flight. The dispute terminated in a battle between the Cimmerian chiefs and the Cimmerian people; in which the chiefs all perished, and were buried by the people near the banks of the Dniester, where the great barrow was still to be seen in the time of Herodotus.

The Cimmerians then abandoned their territory to the Scythians, and passed along the eastern shore of the Euxine, through the pass of Dariel, in the Caucasian range, towards Asia Minor, where they finally established themselves in the neighbourhood of the city of Sinope. From Sinope they made excursions into the rich and fertile districts of western Asia Minor, and seized and sacked the great city of Sardis, the capital of the Lydian empire; but they were at length driven out by Ardys, the reigning Lydian king, and went no one knows whither.

Meantime, a great army of Scythians, under King Madyes, who is supposed to have been the same as Okhons Han, started off in pursuit of the flying Cimmerians. When, however, their onward progress was arrested by the rocky masses of the Caucasus, between the Black Sea

and the Caspian, they missed the pass of Dariel, near the Black Sea, and passed through the defile of Derbend, near the Caspian. Instead, therefore, of entering Asia Minor, and overtaking the Cimmerians, they went much further to the east, and entered the territory of Media. At that time the Medes were a rising power in Asia. They had revolted against the great Assyrian empire, and were now actively engaged in besieging the mighty city of Nineveh. The Scythian horde came up during the siege, and totally defeated the Medes, and thus obtained a terrible ascendency, which lasted for twenty-eight years. The recklessness and licentiousness of these rude barbarians must have rendered their empire an empire of terror. Not content with exacting the usual tribute, they rode through the country and seized whatever pleased their savage fancy. At last the Medes invited them to a great feast, and plied them with strong wines until they were thoroughly intoxicated; and then, falling upon them whilst prostrated by their excesses, they put most of them to the sword.

The Medes, thus freed from their ferocious and brutal tyrants, formed an alliance with the newly risen Chaldee-Babylonian empire, under the father of Nebuchadnezzar; and thus were enabled to complete the downfall of Assyria by the destruction of Nineveh. Meantime the remnant of the Scythian horde, which was still very formidable, attempted to return to the Cimmerian territory in Southern Russia, which they had invaded so many years before. Accordingly, they seem to have passed through Armenia into Syria and Palestine, and to have entered the latter country about the time that Nebuchadnezzar was carrying off the Jews into Babylonian captivity. Advancing towards Egypt, they were bribed to return by the Egyptian king. During their retreat they plundered the temple of Astarte, called Aphrodite by the Greeks, in the Philistine city of Ascalon; and it was supposed that the sacri-

legists and their descendants were afflicted with a peculiar disease, as a punishment for this act of impiety.

At last the Scythians reached Cimmeria, which was afterwards called Scythia. Here, according to tradition, they encountered an unexpected enemy. Their wives, whom they had left behind them, having despaired of ever seeing their husbands again, had married their slaves, and a new race had sprung up, who opposed the return of the masters of their own fathers. Several battles were fought, but without either side gaining any advantage. At last, one of the Scythians is said to have cried to his comrades, "Men of Scythia, are we not fighting with slaves? We ought, therefore, to lay aside our spears and swords, and march against them with horsewhips; for, whilst we attack them with arms, they imagine themselves to be of equal birth; but if they see us with whips, they will remember that they are our slaves." This advice was adopted, and the slaves are said to have been so much astonished at the whips that they at once fled; and thus the Scythians regained possession of the country.

Herodotus had heard most of this history before he commenced his voyage, and it only served to increase his interest in the people and their country. Sailing by the mouths of the Danube, which formed the boundary between Thrace and Scythia, the vessel pursued its northerly course past the mouth of the river Dniester until it approached the city of Olbia, at the united mouth of the rivers Bog and Dnieper. At the river Dniester Herodotus was shown the footprint of Heracles, which was still to be seen in the rock, and which was two cubits, or three English feet, in length. Thus in the early part of July the three months' voyage was completed; and Phylarchus, having brought his ship into the harbour of the Greek settlement of Olbia, saw that Herodotus and the two merchants obtained comfortable lodgings in that half-barbarous town.

Olbia was the great resort of Greek merchants from the Chersonesus and ports on the Black Sea; and it was a very rare occurrence for a ship to have made a voyage direct from Athens or Corinth to so distant a mart. Phylarchus, however, was too good a navigator and too brave a man to fear the dangers and perils which might have kept back less experienced skippers; and, above all, he considered that he had now married a wife, and was likely to have descendants to perpetuate the worship of the hero-ancestor of his family; and that therefore he ought to brave all dangers for the sake of reaching the most profitable ports, and hoarding up riches for the education of any forthcoming sons, and for the dowries of unborn daughters. To Olbia, therefore, he had determined to come, and here he and the two merchants were very soon so busy with Greeks, and Scythians, and barbarians of every shape and hue, that Herodotus was almost at a loss for some one to assist him in seeing the country and learning the manners and religion of the natives.

The Scythians generally appeared to our traveller to be a haughty and reserved, but very ignorant people. Many of them, in spite of the luxuries brought to their country by the Greek merchants, and in spite of the tribute paid by the latter to the Scythian king, were accustomed to regard the strangers as interlopers belonging to an inferior race, whom it would be a wise act to drive into the sea. But these hostile gentry, like true Mongols, were far too indolent to act with anything like energy, unless under the influence of some such feverish excitement as that which had led to their original migration from the pastures of Asia. Some Scythians, who had been brought more into contact with the Greeks, were a little more friendly; and as they understood a little of the Greek language and perfectly comprehended the taste of unmixed wine, Herodotus, after a little time, found no great difficulty in obtaining such trustworthy information as verified and added to

his previously acquired knowledge. Moreover, there was one Scythian of distinction, named Timnes, with whom he became acquainted, and who kindly informed him of many traditions and stories connected with the history of the people, which were not correctly known even to the Greek residents. Timnes was a true Scythian, but acted as a kind of native commissioner in the Greek settlement at Olbia. Accordingly he always encamped in the neighbourhood of Olbia; for his duties were to keep a constant eye on the interests of his master, the King of Scythia, and to receive the duties which the Greek residents were obliged to pay for permission to remain in the country. All the information, therefore, which Timnes imparted to Herodotus may be particularly relied on as authentic.

Before, however, we relate any of these traditions, it will be advisable to get some notion of our traveller's first impressions of the country. The first thing which attracted his attention was the extraordinary mode of life which prevailed amongst the people; for no enemy who attacked them could ever escape, and no one could overtake them, unless they pleased. They possessed neither cities nor fortifications, but were all mounted archers, dwelling in waggons, which they took about with them, and living not upon the fruits of the earth, but upon their cattle, their chief drink being the milk furnished by their mares. The country was admirably adapted for this wandering kind of life, for it was a wide steppe, rich in grass and well watered, its rivers being almost as numerous as the canals of Egypt. The people were divided into different tribes, some of whom were agriculturists, and cultivated wheat during their wanderings, to barter or sell at Olbia. Others, who were perhaps half Greeks, and chiefly lived in the neighbourhood of Olbia, would use it themselves for food, as well as onions, garlic, lentils, and millet. There was also another tribe of agriculturists, who lived more to the east, and who stated that they were

the descendants of some Greek settlers who came from the city of Miletus in Ionia; and it was said that they actually possessed a town with walls and gates; but Herodotus never could learn whether this was exactly true or not. Other Scythians were regular nomades, who never cultivated the earth at all. The most powerful tribe were called the Royal Scythians. These occupied nearly all the Crimea and the northern shores of the Sea of Azoff, and were the most valiant and numerous of all, regarding the other Scythians as their slaves.

The religion of the Scythians was very barbarous. Their gods appeared to Herodotus to be identical with Zeus and the Earth-goddess, whom they regarded as his wife; also with Hestia, Apollo, Aphrodite, Poseidon, and Ares. They sacrificed to all their deities excepting Ares, in the same manner, and used no altars, images, or temples, excepting in his particular worship, which we shall describe presently. The victims were generally grazing cattle, and most frequently horses. In every sacrifice the victim was brought forward standing up on its legs, but with its fore-feet tied by a rope. The sacrificer then came behind the animal, and threw it down by pulling the rope; and, as it fell, he invoked the god to whom he was sacrificing. He then twisted a halter round the neck of the victim, and tightened it with a stick until the beast was strangled. He kindled no fire, and performed no preparatory ceremonies or libations, but first flayed the animal and then he proceeded to cook the meat. The cooking was managed by the following contrivance, which the Scythians had invented because their country was wholly destitute of wood. Having drawn off the skin from the sacrificed animal, the sacrificer and his attendants stripped the flesh from the bones, and placed it in large cauldrons of water, and boiled it over a fire made with the bones. If they had no cauldrons at hand, they crammed all the flesh into the belly of the animal, and

then poured in water, as before, and boiled it over the bones. These bones burnt exceedingly well; and the belly easily contained the flesh. After the cooking, the sacrificer consecrated the first pieces of the flesh and entrails, and threw them behind him; and then the worshippers generally sat down and feasted upon the remainder.

The sacrifices to Ares, the deity of war, were conducted in a far more savage and bloody manner, and included human victims selected from the prisoners of war. The sanctuary of this deity merely consisted of a great square heap of faggots, having three of its sides perpendicular, whilst the fourth side sloped down to admit of persons walking up. Upon this heap each tribe placed an ancient iron scimitar, which was the sacred symbol of Ares. Cattle and horses, and the hundredth man of all the prisoners taken in war, were sacrificed annually to these old scimitars. The wretched human victims, however, were offered in a very different way from the cattle. A libation of wine was poured on their heads; and their throats were cut over a bowl, which was then carried up the heap, and the blood poured over the scimitar. The right arm was then cut off, and thrown into the air; and after the performance of the remaining sacrifices, the people departed, leaving the body and arm remaining at the spot where they fell. It is remarkable that, in all their sacrifices, this people abstained from the use of swine—a significant fact to those engaged in researches in early Asiatic history.

The customs of the Scythians during their wars were equally ferocious. A Scythian drank the blood of the first enemy whom he conquered, and presented the king with the heads of all those whom he slew in battle—for if he brought no head, he received no share of the booty. Scalps and skulls were preserved as trophies, after being first prepared in a peculiar manner. The head was first

flayed by making a cut near the ears all round it, and then shaking out the skull. The operator then cleaned the scalp with a rib bone of an ox, and softened it by shaking it about with his hands; and when he had rendered it perfectly supple, he hung it over the bridle of his steed as a trophy. Many of the more ingenious warriors made mantles of the scalps, by sewing them together in the same way that the shepherds of Greece were accustomed to sew together their garments of hides. Many also drew off the skin and nails from the right hands of their slain enemies, and used it as a covering for their quivers; and many, indeed, flayed their enemies whole, and stretched the skin on wood, and carried it about on horseback. The skulls of their bitterest enemies they used as drinking bowls, first thoroughly cleansing them, and then covering them with leather. Sometimes they would gild the inside if they were rich enough. If they had quarreled with their relatives, and had fought and overcome them in the presence of the king, they would treat their skulls in the same manner. When a Scythian received visits from guests of high rank, or from those whom he desired to honour, he placed all the skulls in his possession before his visitors, and related all the circumstances of his last fight with the enemy, how he had been attacked, and how he had gained the victory. Once, also, in the year, the chief of every district mixed wine in a bowl, and all the Scythians in the neighbourhood who had previously killed an enemy drank from the bowl. Those who had not been successful in so doing were not allowed to taste the wine, but remained seated in dishonour at a distance off; and this was accounted to be the greatest disgrace. On the other hand, those who had killed a great many men, drank from two vessels at the same time.

The Scythians made contracts with each other in a very solemn and impressive manner. Wine was poured into a

large earthen vessel and mixed with blood taken by a bodkin or dagger from the parties contracting. The parties then dipped a scimitar, some arrows, a battle-axe, and a javelin into the vessel, and made many solemn protestations; and the mixture was then handed round and drank, not only by the parties themselves, but also by the more distinguished of their followers.

Soothsayers were very numerous amongst the Scythians; and Herodotus was perpetually seeing them. Their mode of divining was peculiar, and somewhat ridiculous. They carried large bundles of willow rods with them; and when about to prophecy they laid them on the ground and shook them together. They then elaborately placed each rod apart from the others, and at last uttered their predictions whilst gathering them up one at a time. This was the national mode of divining. Another method prevailed amongst those Scythians who were visited with that disease which was said to have been sent as a punishment upon those men and their descendants who plundered the temple of Aphrodite or Astarte at Ascalon. The disease did in reality proceed from excessive exercise on horseback; but as it rendered men totally unable to perform their customary avocations, it was supposed to be of a sacred character. Those afflicted with it were called Enarees, and declared that though Aphrodite had thus punished them, yet she had likewise endowed them with the power of divining. Accordingly they split the bark of a linden tree into three pieces, and twisted it round their fingers; and then they untwisted it, whilst they uttered their prophecies.

The great time for the soothsayers was when a king of Scythia was taken ill. Herodotus was informed that whenever the sovereign was attacked by a disease he sent for three of the most famous soothsayers, and called upon them to state the cause of his sickness. Accordingly, they would throw out and pick up their rods, or twist and un-

twist the linden bark round their fingers, and then declare that some one Scythian, whom they were always obliged to name, had sworn falsely by the royal hearth, and thus had broken the most sacred oath that could be conceived, and brought on the illness which was afflicting the king. The accused person was then at once arrested and brought before the soothsayers, who, thereupon, confronted him and boldly charged him with having sworn against the king's hearth, and caused the king's sickness. The prisoner of course denied the charge, and complained bitterly of the soothsayers. Six more soothsayers were next summoned to deliver their opinion; and if they decided that the prisoner was really guilty, his head was immediately cut off, and the three first diviners divided his property amongst themselves. If, however, the six fresh soothsayers acquitted him, others were called in, and again others after them, and if the majority still concurred in the acquittal, the three first soothsayers themselves were put to death after a peculiar and savage fashion. A waggon drawn by oxen was filled with faggots; and the three soothsayers were gagged, and tied hand and foot, and placed in the midst of the faggots. Fire was then applied to the wood; and the soothsayers perished in the flames, whilst the terrified oxen were suffered to run where they pleased. Many of the oxen thus perished with the soothsayers; and others only escaped after the pole had been burnt asunder, and they had been very much scorched. The king also executed the male children of those whom he put to death, but preserved all the females belonging to the family.

The funeral rites observed by barbarian nations are always interesting, and generally very significant; but those of the Scythians were especially extraordinary. The kings were always buried in a district on the banks of the Dnieper, and just below the cataracts; and here, whenever a sovereign died, a large square grave was prepared.

Meantime the royal corpse was covered with wax, and the stomach was cut open and embowelled, and filled with bruised cypress, incense, parsley, and anise-seed, and then sewn up again. The body was next placed in a chariot and carried from one tribe to the other; and the people of each tribe followed it as it was brought to them, cutting off part of their ears, shaving off their hair, wounding their arms, lacerating their foreheads and noses, and driving arrows through their left hands. At last, when the body had been thus carried through the several provinces, it was taken to the district on the Dnieper, which was the most remote corner of the Scythian territory. Here the attendant Scythians placed the body in the large square grave on a bed of leaves; and, fixing spears on each side of it, they laid pieces of wood over it, and covered the whole with mats. They then strangled one of the deceased king's concubines, and also his cup-bearer, cook, master of horse, body-servant, messenger, and horses, and buried them all in the remaining part of the large square grave, together with golden goblets and the best specimens of all his other property. They then heaped up over the whole an immense mound or barrow, which they tried to make as large as possible. After the expiration of a year, the people selected fifty of the royal servants who were still living, and who had been the most closely attendant upon the departed monarch. All these were native-born Scythians; for the king possessed no slaves whatever, but chose any Scythian he pleased to be his servant. However, the fifty unhappy favourites selected by the people were taken to the royal barrow and there strangled, together with fifty of the finest horses in the royal stud. The people then embowelled both men and horses, and stuffed them with chaff, and sewed them up again; and a stake was run through each horse from the tail to the neck, and another through each man. The men were placed upon the horses, the stakes inside them

fitting into a hole in the horses' stakes. The figures were at last mounted on the insides of two half-wheels, and elevated on posts, so that the legs were suspended in the air. The two half wheels supported the horse's stomach, one under his shoulders, and the other under his hinder parts. Each of these figures was fastened to another post; and all were thus arranged round the barrow.

The people were buried in a different manner to their kings. Herodotus was an eye-witness of several of their funerals, and found that though the ceremonies were less bloody than those which were performed on the death of a sovereign, yet they were all equally savage. The corpse was laid in a chariot, and carried about by the nearest relatives amongst their friends, who each in turn entertained the attendants, and set the same victuals and wine before the dead body as before the other guests. Forty days were spent in these peregrinations; and after they had expired the body was buried in the earth, and a small barrow raised over it.

The purification of the relatives and friends of the deceased was performed in a very extraordinary manner. The Scythians never washed any part of their bodies excepting their heads, and accordingly purified themselves with an intoxicating kind of smoke, which seems to have been somewhat analogous to the smoke of tobacco. Having first washed and thoroughly cleansed their heads, they made a tent, by stretching thick woollen cloths over three sticks fixed in the ground and inclining towards each other. They next placed a vessel full of red-hot stones in the centre of the tent, and crept round it, whilst the tent covering was kept very close and almost air-tight. They then threw hemp seed on the hot stones; and a smoke and steam soon arose, which was denser than the hottest vapour-bath; and the intoxicated Scythians would cry and shout at the top of their voices, from the excitement and exhilaration produced by this overpowering pro-

cess. The ladies did not purify themselves by this smoke, but by another ceremony, which was better calculated to preserve their personal beauty. They made a kind of paste of cypress, cedar, and frankincense, which they pounded with rough stones, and mixed together with water. They then covered themselves from head to foot with this paste, and suffered it to remain until the next day; and then when it was removed it was found to have given the skin a pleasant odour, and to have rendered the complexion clean and shining.

The Crimea was not visited by Herodotus; nor indeed would any Greek captain approach those inhospitable shores, unless driven against his will by the irresistible winds. Here lived the barbarous Tauri, who lived entirely by war and pillage, and of whom Herodotus heard many a wild tradition from Greek sailors. If ever any ship was wrecked against that coast, the Tauri would seize all who might escape from the storm, and sacrifice them to the virgin Iphigenia, to whom the people had erected a great temple on the summit of a lofty precipice. The unfortunate mariner was first sprinkled with the lustral water; all the hair was then cut from his head and burned, and the sacred barley mixed with salt was scattered upon his forehead; lastly he was offered to the virgin; but many stories were afloat concerning the manner in which these human sacrifices were performed. Some people said that the victim was struck on the head with a club; others declared that the sacrificers threw the body down the precipice beneath the temple, and then impaled the head upon a stake; others, again, admitted that the head was impaled, but stated that the body was not thrown from a precipice, but buried in the earth. The conduct of the Tauri towards their prisoners of war was equally ferocious. Whenever they subdued an enemy, they cut off the heads of those who were killed or taken, and stuck them upon long poles; and then they raised these poles

above their houses — usually over their chimneys, and declared that the heads were the guardians of their households.

Such were the inhabitants of Southern Russia and the Crimea twenty-three centuries ago; but we have not yet half exhausted the subject. The summer months passed away, and the voyagers returned to Byzantium for the winter; and here Herodotus collected together so many myths and stories, and so much information concerning the surrounding countries, that we shall find it necessary to devote at least one other chapter to the further account of the Scythians and their neighbours.

CHAP. XXVI.

SCYTHIA (CONTINUED), B. C. 459.

SEVERITY OF THE SCYTHIAN WINTER. — HERODOTUS REMOVES TO BYZANTIUM. — SCYTHIAN PREJUDICE AGAINST FOREIGN CUSTOMS. — STORY OF ANACHARSIS THE SCYTHIAN, WHO WAS PUT TO DEATH FOR CELEBRATING THE ORGIES OF CYBELE. — STORY OF SCYLAS, WHO WAS PUT TO DEATH FOR CELEBRATING THE ORGIES OF DIONYSUS. — SCYTHIAN MYTH CONCERNING THEIR OWN ORIGIN. — STORY OF TARGITAUS. — GREEK TRADITION OF THE ORIGIN OF THE SCYTHIANS. — STORY OF HERACLES AND HIS SERPENT WIFE. — STORY OF THE INVASION OF SCYTHIA BY DARIUS HYSTASPIS, AND THE TERRIBLE RETREAT.

THE climate of Scythia was always severe, but during six or eight months of the year the cold was intolerable; and it was this circumstance which had induced Phylarchus to return to Byzantium before the winter commenced. The warm climate of Greece was scarcely ever visited by a frost, but during a winter in Scythia water would freeze directly it was poured upon the ground. Even the sea would freeze over, and Herodotus was told that during this season the Cimmerian Bosphorus, (or, as we call it, the Straits of Kertch), between the Crimea and the opposite shore of Asia, was always frozen so hard that the Tauri led their armies and drove their waggons over the ice to attack the Sindians of Circassia. The winter moreover differed in many other respects from the winter of Greece. During this season no rain fell in Scythia, whilst during the summer it was almost continually falling. Again, in Scythia there were no thunder-storms in the winter as there were in Greece, whilst during the summer months they were very violent. Moreover, whilst in other

countries the asses and mules were alone able to stand severe cold, and horses if exposed became frost-bitten and wasted away, yet in Scythia it was the horses that could endure the cold, and the asses and mules that could not hold out.

Herodotus found it cold enough at Byzantium, but he had a sufficiency of warm clothing to enable him to endure with ease the severity of the weather. He still was enabled to collect much information concerning Scythia and the surrounding nations; for many Greek merchants resided at Byzantium who had carried on a lucrative trade with Olbia for many years, and were therefore well acquainted with the region to the north of the Black Sea. Moreover, Timnes, the Scythian, had obtained a passage in Phylarchus's ship, for the purpose of carrying on some negotiations with the Greeks in the neighbourhood of Byzantium. Timnes had travelled more than any other Scythian. He could speak the Greek language, and indeed often acted as interpreter between the Greek merchants and his own countrymen. He was well versed in the traditions which were current amongst the people of his nation. He could remember the time when Darius the great king invaded Scythia, and attempted to conquer the country; though that event had occurred nearly fifty years before, and when he had scarcely reached the years of manhood. He had likewise been brought more frequently into contact with the Greeks than almost any other Scythian; and he secretly felt a great admiration for the enterprising strangers who traded at Olbia. At the same time he never deviated from the primitive habits and usages of Scythian life. He moved about with his horses, his waggons, his tents, and his slaves in the same way as his fathers had done before him; and the women and children of his family lived in strict accordance with the old Scythian fashions. He always received Herodotus with the utmost hospitality, but never for one moment would he adopt any

foreign customs, and, least of all, those which belonged to the Hellenic nation.

The fact was that the whole Scythian people regarded all foreign customs, and especially those of the Greeks, with the utmost abhorrence; and some had lost their lives for having sinned against this national prejudice. Timnes related to our young traveller a very curious story connected with this deeply rooted jealousy; and as it serves to illustrate the national character, we shall repeat it here.

Many years before the present date there reigned over Scythia a king named Saulius; and this king had a brother whose name was Anacharsis. Now whilst Saulius was quietly reigning at home, his brother Anacharsis went abroad and visited many foreign countries, and displayed considerable wisdom during his progress. At length Anacharsis turned towards home; and during the return voyage through the Sea of Marmora he landed at the island of Cyzicus, and beheld the inhabitants celebrating the orgies of Cybele, the great mother of the gods, with the utmost magnificence. The wild and mystic character of the sacred rites made a deep impression upon the intelligent barbarian. In the depths of a sacred grove he beheld the enthusiastic worshippers of the ancient goddess inspired by the Great Mother, and performing their orgiastic dances to the sound of horns, drums, and cymbals. He, too, caught the mad enthusiasm, and made a vow to the Great Mother, that if he should return safe and sound to his native country, he would sacrifice to her with the same ceremonies which he now saw performed by the Cyzicenians. Accordingly, having reached his native land in safety, he determined to keep his vow. Retiring to a forest in the eastern quarter of Scythia, he there performed all the enthusiastic dancing and orgiastic rites belonging to the worship of Cybele, holding a timbrel

in his hand, and fastening the little images of the gods about his person. But, in spite of all his precautions, his secret was discovered, and the result proved fatal. A Scythian chanced to see him engaged in the wild and mysterious worship, and immediately carried the information to the king Saulius. The latter would scarcely believe that his own brother could be guilty of such a monstrous crime, and immediately proceeded to the forest in person to ascertain the truth; and there he saw Anacharsis actually celebrating the foreign rites. His wrath at once overcame every other feeling, and he shot an arrow into his brother's heart. Thus was sacrificed the wisest of Scythians to the national jealousy of foreign institutions.

A long time after this event a Scythian prince named Scylas, the son of king Ariapithes, met with a similar fate. The wife of Ariapithes and mother of Scylas was not a Scythian woman, but a Greek, who had attracted the admiration and affection of Ariapithes. But though the Greek lady was thus made queen of Scythia, yet she still looked back with regret upon the civilised and polite institutions of her native land, and accordingly instructed her son Scylas in the language and letters of that country which she was never to see again. In process of time Ariapithes was killed by treachery during a war with a neighbouring state, and was succeeded by his son Scylas. The new king had naturally imbibed from his mother a disgust for the Scythian mode of life, and a strong love for Greek institutions. The city of Olbia and Greek residents there thus became the chief objects of his attention. He had already taken a Scythian wife out of respect for the prejudices of his subjects; but he likewise married a lady of Olbia, and built for her within the city a large and magnificent palace surrounded by great figures of griffins and sphinxes, sculptured out of white marble.

Frequently he would lead his horde to the neighbourhood of this city, and leaving it to encamp in the suburbs, he would go within the walls and reside in his palace for a month or so at a time. Moreover, he would throw off his Scythian habit directly he passed the city gate; and during the whole of his residence in Olbia he would wear the Greek costume, live in the Greek style, and worship the gods according to the Greek fashion. Meantime the city gates were carefully guarded, so that no Scythian should enter the streets, and discover that his king had proved a traitor to his country.

At last it was fated that misfortune should befall him. During one of his visits to Olbia, he was very desirous of being initiated into the mysteries of Dionysus. But just as he was about to commence the sacred rites, Zeus, the thunderer, hurled a bolt at his magnificent palace, and burnt it to the ground. In spite, however, of this warning from the gods, Scylas accomplished his initiation. Now the boisterous orgies belonging to the Dionysiac mysteries had particularly excited the contempt of the phlegmatic Scythians, who had been accustomed to remark on the extreme unreasonableness of worshipping a deity which drove men to madness. When, therefore, Scylas had been initiated into the mysteries, one of the citizens of Olbia ran out to the Scythian encampment in the suburbs, and cried, "You Scythians laugh at us for celebrating the orgies of Dionysus; but behold the god has now inspired your king, and he, too, is performing the sacred rites; and if you disbelieve me, follow me, and I will show you the thing." The whole Scythian horde was aroused at hearing these words. The chiefs immediately followed the Greek into the city, and were conducted by him to the summit of a tower, from whence they could behold the orgies. Onward came the mad procession of nymphs and satyrs, singing the loud dithyrambs in honour of the god, and bearing the mysterious symbols

of his worship; and there, in the very midst, was the Scythian king, the wildest in that enthusiastic crowd, bearing the thyrsus and acting the bacchanal. The Scythian chiefs were aghast at the conduct of their sovereign, and, returning to the camp, acquainted the horde with what they had seen. The whole Scythian nation was soon in a state of revolt, and set up Octamasades, the brother of Scylas, in the room of the latter. Scylas fled over the Danube to Sitalces, the king of the Thracians; but Octamasades, at the head of a large army, followed after him. Now it so happened that a short time previously a brother of Sitalces had fled from Thrace into Scythia, and was now under the protection of Octamasades. Accordingly, Sitalces proposed that this brother should be restored to him upon condition of delivering up Scylas. The terms were accepted; and directly Octamasades had his brother Scylas in his power, he beheaded him on the spot. Such was the end of Scylas.

We have already related the history of Scythia according to the most authentic accounts which Herodotus could collect; but two stories were told to our young traveller, one by Timnes and another by a Greek at Byzantium, which are both worth preserving as curiosities, though not likely to gain any great degree of credence from the modern reader. The story told by Timnes is to be regarded as a Scythian tradition; and that related by the Greek resident is to be received as an Hellenic legend.

The Scythians declared that their nation had originated at a much later period than any other, and that it arose in the following manner. About a thousand years before the invasion of Darius, the first man appeared in Scythia, and his name was Targitaus. The country was said to have been previously a wilderness, and the parents of Targitaus were said to have been Zeus himself, and a daughter of the river Borysthenes, now called the river Dnieper. Herodotus of course declined to believe in this ridiculous

parentage, but many a Greek might have been found to accept it, even in the enlightened age in which our traveller lived. However, to go on with the tradition, which was of genuine native growth, this Targitaus had three sons named Lipoxais, Arpoxais, and Colaxais. In their time a plough, a yoke, an axe, and a bowl, all made of gold, fell from heaven upon the Scythian territory. The eldest of the three brothers wished to take them away, but as he drew near, the gold began to burn. The second brother approached them, but with the like result. The third and youngest then approached, upon which the fire went out, and he was enabled to carry away the golden gifts. The two eldest then made the youngest king, and henceforth the golden gifts were watched by the kings with the greatest care, and annually approached with magnificent sacrifices to render them propitious. From Lipoxais, the eldest, were descended the Auchatæ Scythians; from Arpoxais, the second, were descended the Catiari and Traspies; and from Colaxais, the youngest, came the royal race, which were called Paralatæ. But all the hordes were called Scoloti, though the Greeks called them Scythians.

The Greek account of the origin of the Scythians was a piece of pure invention, and belongs to the ancient myth connected with Heracles the hero. It was as follows. After Heracles had erected the Pillars at Gibraltar, and performed his tenth labour of carrying off the herds of Geryon from the island of Erytheia, off the coast of Spain, he proceeded through the whole length of the European continent eastwards towards the territory of Scythia. Here he was overtaken by a heavy storm of frost and snow, and drawing his lion's skin around him, he lay down and fell asleep. Meantime his mares, which were feeding apart from his chariot, vanished by some divine chance. When he awoke he sought for them in vain, and at last having gone over the whole country, he reached the

eastern quarter. Here he met a strange kind of monster named Echidna, whose upper half was that of a beautiful woman, but whose lower half was that of a serpent. When he had recovered his surprise, he asked her if she had seen anything of his strayed mares. She replied that she had the mares in her own possession, and would restore them upon the condition of his making her his wife. Heracles accepted the terms, and Echidna became his wife, and subsequently gave birth to three sons. At last the hero demanded the restoration of his mares, and declared his intention of leaving her; and Echidna was reluctantly compelled to comply. Before however the departure of her inconstant husband, she desired to know what she should do with the three sons when they reached the years of discretion. She stated that she was ruler over the whole country, and wished to know whether she should establish them there, or send them to their father. Heracles replied by giving her his bow and also his belt, which had a golden cup at the extremity of the clasp; and he then said to her, "When the three boys have reached the age of manhood, give them this bow and this girdle; and he who can bend the bow and gird himself with this girdle, you may keep in this country, but he who fails in the performance, I would have you banish from all this region." Echidna complied with these injunctions. She named the eldest, Agathyrsus; the second, Gelonus; and the youngest, Scythes. The two eldest were unable to accomplish the proposed task, and were therefore expelled from the country; but Scythes, the youngest, bent the bow, and girdled himself with the belt, and was permitted to remain. From this Scythes, son of Heracles and Echidna, were descended all the subsequent kings of Scythia; and as every Scythian continued to wear a cup at his belt even down to the time of our traveller's visit, the custom was supposed to have originated with the circumstance narrated in the legend.

Amongst these and other historical and mythical traditions, it may be readily supposed that Herodotus obtained from Timnes a full account of the attempt made by Darius, the great king of Persia, to invade and conquer the Scythian territory. This indeed was a subject upon which Timnes was ever willing to dilate; for it was not only connected with the events of his early youth, but with the most glorious achievements of his fellow-countrymen. The Persian empire extended from the sands of the Sahara and cataracts of the Nile, to the banks of the Indus and Jaxartes. The dominions of Darius thus comprised the modern territories of Egypt, Asiatic Turkey, Persia, and Affghanistan, together with part of Arabia and Independent Tartary; but still the Great King desired to conduct an army over the passes of the Balkan, and broad stream of the Danube, and to reduce the great grass steppe of southern Russia to his imperial sway.

The despot of so vast an empire was but little likely to want an excuse for prosecuting his scheme of foreign conquest. A century or two previously, a Scythian horde had passed the Caucasus, and over-run the smiling plains of upper Asia, and pillaged and plundered without restraint from the Caspian to the Mediterranean. Revenge was therefore the avowed purpose of this expedition; and as the imperial treasury was full of gold, Darius assembled an immense array, numbering, it was said, 700,000 horse and foot. Marching from the city of Susa, scarcely 150 miles from the Persian Gulf, he led his enormous host over the Tigris and Euphrates, and along the whole extent of Asia Minor, to the shore of the Strait of Constatinople. Here, not far from the present capital of the Turkish empire, a bridge of boats had been thrown across the strait by a celebrated Samian architect named Mandrocles; and Darius led his forces over this bridge, and then proceeded in a northerly direction through the defiles of the Balkan, to the right bank of the Danube. The

banks of this river had been joined together by another bridge of ships, constructed by the Ionians; and thus the Persians crossed over without difficulty, and found themselves in the Scythian territory. The Ionians had sailed to the Danube in 600 ships, and when all the troops were over, Darius ordered the Ionians to destroy the bridge, and disembark from their vessels, for the purpose of accompanying his army. A wise old Greek, however, named Coes, persuaded him to recall his order, and to leave the Ionians to guard the bridge, and thus secure a retreat; and Darius accordingly summoned the Ionian commanders, and gave them a rope tied in sixty knots, and said to them, "Every day after I have commenced my march, do you untie one of these knots; and if sixty days should expire without my returning, you may then loosen the bridge of ships, and sail back to your own country."

Meantime, the Scythians felt that they could not cope with Darius in a pitched battle, and sent messengers to the surrounding nations to request their assistance. The tribes to the west and north of Scythia refused to war against the Persians, unless the Persians invaded their territories; but those to the east, beyond the Sea of Azoff and river Don, promised to assist the Scythians. The Scythians, however, still felt themselves unable to meet Darius in the open field. Accordingly, they sent their families and waggons far away to a place of safety, and then separated their forces into two divisions; one being intended to retire slowly before the Persians, and lead them in an easterly direction, towards the river Don and the territories of their friendly neighbours; whilst the other was to subsequently meet the invaders in the same manner, and lead them towards the south and west into the territories of those neighbouring states which had refused to fight without being first attacked. Thus they hoped to exhaust all the resources of Darius, and detain

him until his whole army should be thoroughly weakened, and they could fall upon him with the sword.

The Scythians having thus decided upon their plan of action, followed it out through the entire campaign. When Darius and his Persians had performed a three days' march from the river Danube, they fell in with the advanced guard of the first division of the Scythians. We need scarcely repeat that the Scythians were all mounted archers, and that they now carried nothing with them excepting such cattle as were required for their maintenance. Accordingly, the Scythians retreated slowly towards the river Don, keeping about one day's march in advance of the invaders, and destroying all the corn and forage in their course. After several days they approached the river Don, which they at once crossed, still followed by the Persians, until they at last reached a desert country in the far interior. Here Darius ceased his pursuit, and employed his army in building eight large forts. Suddenly, however, the Scythians vanished altogether, and the Great King left the forts half finished, and hastily returned to Scythia, supposing that the enemy had retreated in that direction. Here he fell in with the second division, who practised exactly the same kind of tactics, and led him through the territories on the north and west, until he and his army were thoroughly worn out.

In this extremity Darius sent a horseman to Idanthyrsus, who was at that time the king of the Scythians, with the following message. "Most miserable of men, why do you continually fly? If you think yourself able to resist my power, stand and fight! If, on the other hand, you are conscious of your inferiority, cease thy hurried march, bring earth and water as tokens of thy submission, and come to a conference." To this haughty message Idanthyrsus made the following reply. "O Persian, I never fled from any man out of fear, nor is it from fear that I now retreat from before you. What

we Scythians are doing now, we always do, even in time of peace. We have neither cities nor farms for which we should offer you battle; but if you want to fight, go and find the sepulchres of our ancestors and attempt to disturb them, and then you will see whether we can fight or not. If, however, you do as you have done, we shall not fight you unless we like. As for submission, the only masters I acknowledge are the gods, and instead of earth and water I will send you other presents which are far more appropriate."

The Scythians were now greatly enraged at the idea of submission. They sent messages to the first division, which by this time had vanished from the eastern desert and wheeled round towards the west; and these messengers directed its commanders to lead their forces to the bridge over the Danube, and confer with the Ionians who guarded it. This first division accordingly proceeded to the Danube and prayed the Ionians to be sure to destroy the bridge at the expiration of the sixty days. The Ionians promised so to do, and the division immediately returned to the main army.

The Scythians soon saw that the Persian army was so weakened that they need not trouble themselves to continue leading it about the country. They began to attack the soldiers of Darius whenever the latter were about to take their meals. The Scythian cavalry could always rout the Persian cavalry and drive them back upon the Persian infantry; but the Scythian cavalry then fell back, as the Persian infantry was too strong for them to attack it. However the asses and mules in the Persian camp invariably set up an awful braying at sight of the Scythian horse; whilst the latter, unaccustomed to the appearance of those strange animals, which were never produced in Scthyia, would wheel round in confusion, prick up their ears, start and bolt, and throw the Scythian line into great disorder. But this circumstance did not affect

the general success of the Scythians, nor arrest the rapid decline of the Persian army. The character of the war was indeed totally changed. The Scythians were most anxious that the enemy should remain in the country and be utterly destroyed; and on several occasions they left a few head of cattle purposely for the Persians to take, in order to allure them to stay by the hope of greater success.

At last, when Darius was in great straits, the Scythian chiefs sent him a herald carrying the following gifts, namely, a bird, a mouse, a frog, and five arrows. The Persians asked the bearer the meaning of the presents; but he replied that his only orders were to deliver them up and return immediately. The Persians then consulted together. Darius said that he thought the Scythians meant them as tokens of submission, instead of the earth and water which had been demanded. "A mouse," he said, "is bred in the earth and lives on the same food as man; a frog lives in the water; a bird is very like a horse; and the arrows are delivered up as the whole strength of the Scythian nation." One of the Persian commanders, however, did not coincide with this view. According to his opinion, the presents had the following meaning. "Unless, O Persians, ye become birds and fly into the air, or mice and hide in the earth, or frogs and leap into the sea, you shall never return home but be stricken with these arrows.

Darius and his whole army soon ascertained which interpretation was correct. The Scythian army drew up in battle array as if intending to come to an engagement. Suddenly a hare started in the midst of the ranks, and each man as he saw it gave chase with loud shouting. Darius seeing the commotion, and hearing the uproar, inquired the cause, and learned that the Scythians were leaving their ranks on the eve of battle, in order to give chase to a hare. He soon perceived that the enemy were

treating him and his forces with the utmost contempt; and he likewise comprehended the true meaning of the Scythian presents. He immediately called a council of war to decide upon the best means of effecting a return to Asia. The same Persian commander who had offered his opinion respecting the gifts, now gave his advice respecting the best means of effecting a retreat. "When night draws on," he said, "let us light our fires according to our usual custom, tether all the asses, and leave all our sick and wounded soldiers behind us; and then let us hasten to the banks of the Danube, before the Scythians march there and destroy the bridge, or the Ionians take any resolution which may occasion our ruin." Darius accepted this advice. When night had come on he ordered the asses to be tethered, and the fires to be lighted, in order that the braying of the one, and the flames of the other, might deceive the Scythians. At the same time he left all the sick, feeble, and wounded under the pretext that they were to remain and defend the camp, whilst he with the strength of his army made an attack upon the enemy. Next morning the Persians who had been thus left behind, discovered that they had been really abandoned by the main army, and therefore extended their hands to the Scythians, and informed them of what had occurred. The Scythian forces immediately started off in pursuit, and as they consisted entirely of cavalry, and knew the direct route, which the Persians did not, they arrived at the Danube before Darius, and thus addressed the Ionians in charge of the bridge. "Men of Ionia, the sixty days have already passed and you do wrong in remaining here. Break up the bridge then at once, and depart as speedily as possible; rejoicing that you are free, and giving thanks to the gods and to the Scythians. As for Darius, who was your master, we will so deal with him that he shall never more make war upon any one."

The Ionians then held a consultation. It should be

remembered that the Scythian expedition took place in B. C. 508, being about thirty years after the conquest of the Asiatic Greeks by Cyrus, and eight or ten years before the revolt from Darius. At the period in question therefore, the Ionians and other Asiatic Greeks were not very harshly treated by the Persians; but each city was governed by its own king or tyrant, under the general supremacy of the Persian satrap of the province, exactly as Halicarnassus was governed by Artemisia, in the years of Herodotus's boyhood. Each city had of course sent its appointed contingent of men and ships to assist in the Persian expedition against Scythia, and amongst them were eleven of the petty kings or tyrants; and these eleven accordingly formed themselves into a council to decide upon the best course to pursue at the present crisis.

The most distinguished of the eleven were Miltiades, the tyrant of Chersonesus, and subsequently the hero of Marathon, and the wily tyrant of Miletus, who was named Histiæus. Miltiades proposed that they should comply with the request of the Scythians, destroy the bridge over the Danube, and thus leave Darius and his army to their fate, and seize the opportunity for throwing off the Persian yoke, and establishing the independence of the Asiatic Greeks. Histiæus maintained a contrary opinion. "The independence of the Asiatic Greeks was all fudge. Did not they, the tyrants of the cities, maintain their several sovereignties solely by means of the power of the Great King, which alone supported them on their petty thrones? If the power of Darius was thrown off, would not every city throw off its tyranny and establish a democracy? Where would be their sovereignties then?" These home questions convinced every tyrant present that, to use a government phrase, it was not expedient that the great Persian empire should be broken up, or that her subject cities should enjoy the blessings of freedom.

Having thus decided upon preserving the bridge over

the Danube, the tyrants had next to consider what reply they should make to the Scythians. Histiæus soon suggested a way of getting over the difficulty. In order to deceive the Scythians, they were to break up a small portion of the bridge on the Scythian side, and to promise to break up the whole; which promise was of course not to be kept. Accordingly, the Scythian army received the answer; and placing reliance upon the good faith of the Ionians, they turned back to seek Darius and his Persians, and effect their utter destruction.

Meantime the remnant of the great Persian army was anxiously retreating towards the Danube. They returned by the same track as that by which they had advanced into the country; for they knew of no other. The Scythians, however, who had destroyed all the forage and filled up all the wells in this direction, took it for granted that the Persians would return by some other way. Accordingly, they sought for Darius in those parts where there was pasture and water, and of course missed him. Thus, after much difficulty, and after heavier losses than those which befell the French retreat from Moscow, the Great King at last reached the left bank of the Danube.

It was midnight when the advanced guard rushed to the water's edge to look for the bridge. The sixty days had long since passed away, and the sixty knots must have been all untied long before; but still the Persian army were fearfully excited by the maddening hope that the Ionians might yet have remained at their post. If the bridge were there, every peril was over; the army would soon enter a subject territory, and be refreshed with the sight of home. If the bridge were destroyed, death and destruction stared them in the face. Onward rushed the men. The bridge was broken off; they saw nothing but the thick darkness and heavy mist; they heard nothing but the deathly murmuring of the black waters. The whole army was in the utmost conster-

nation, weeping and wailing. One chance remained. In the service of Darius was an Egyptian who had an exceedingly loud voice; and Darius ordered him to stand on the bank of the river and call Histiæus, the Milesian. Histiæus heard the first shout; the ships were brought up, and the bridge was joined; and thus the Persians escaped into Thrace, and thence returned to Persia. But from that time and henceforth the Scythians regarded the Ionians as being either the most base and cowardly of freemen, or else as the meanest and most faithful of slaves.

CHAP. XXVII.

NATIONS BORDERING ON SCYTHIA, B.C. 459.

POPULATION OF SCYTHIA. — STORY OF THE HUGE BRAZEN CAULDRON MADE OF ARROW HEADS. — RICH SAVAGES OF TRANSYLVANIA. — WOLF-MEN OCCUPYING POLAND. — CANNIBALS IN CENTRAL RUSSIA. — STRANGE STORY OF THE SCYTHIANS AND AMAZONS: SETTLEMENT OF THEIR DESCENDANTS IN ASTRACAN AND THE COUNTRY OF THE DON COSSACKS. — SAVAGE TRIBES OF THE CAUCASUS. — CARAVAN ROUTE BETWEEN THE BLACK SEA AND SIBERIA AND THE KHIRGIS STEPPE. — OTTER AND BEAVER HUNTERS. — STRANGE WOODEN CITY OF GELONUS. — HUNTERS OF THE URAL. — TRADITIONARY ACCOUNT OF THE CALMUCKS. — PEOPLE WHO ALWAYS ATE THEIR PARENTS. — MASSAGETÆ OF THE KHIRGIS STEPPE. — STRANGE MANNERS. — EXPEDITION OF CYRUS THE GREAT AGAINST THE MASSAGETÆ. — DIM GEOGRAPHICAL TRADITIONS.

HERODOTUS had listened to the story of Darius's expedition against Scythia with the utmost interest. The dull, dirty, savage Scythians began to rise in his estimation. He even began to look upon their wandering mode of life in waggons and on horseback as a piece of national wisdom. He made some inquiries concerning the population of Scythia, but, of course, it was next to impossible to obtain any genuine information upon this subject. Some people thought that the Scythians must be very numerous, and others thought the contrary, just as it might happen to strike them. Indeed, any attempt to estimate the number of the natives was mere guess-work. Herodotus, however, had been shown a very strange vessel which had been manufactured in connection with the very subject of population. Between the rivers Bog and Dnieper, and not very far from Olbia, was a bitter fountain, named Exampæus; and by the fountain

lay an immense brass cauldron which would hold upwards of nine thousand gallons, and of which the metal was nearly five inches in thickness. This vessel was said to have been entirely made from the heads of arrows; for a king named Ariantas, having desired to know the population of Scythia, had commanded that every Scythian should bring the head of an arrow, or else suffer the penalty of death. Accordingly, a vast number of arrow heads were brought, and the king resolved to make a monument from them. He therefore cast that immense brazen cauldron, and dedicated it at Exampæus.

Herodotus likewise endeavoured to learn as much as possible concerning the nations which surrounded Scythia, and the character of the trade which was carried on between Olbia and the distant interior. On the west of Scythia, and in the country now called Transylvania, lived a people named Agathyrsi, who wore a profusion of gold on their persons, which they seemed to have obtained from the Carpathian Mountains. Poland was at that time inhabited by a people named the Neuri, of whom every man was said to become a wolf for a few days once every year, and then to re-assume his former shape. Herodotus was induced, by the prevalent notions of the time, to fancy that the people were magicians; but the origin of the story ought, perhaps, to be looked for in the peculiar character which mania would be likely to assume in a population living among forests, and accustomed to hear the howling of wolves at night. The Russian governments to the north of Scythia were inhabited by people of Scythian or Tartar origin, but whose habits were still more uncivilised than their neighbours'. Some were named Androphagi because they were cannibals, and others were named Melanchlæni because they wore black garments.

Eastward of Scythia and the river Don lived the Sauromatæ, in the region which now includes part of the

country of the Don Cossacks and part of the province of Astracan. These Sauromatæ were said to be descended from Scythian fathers and the women called Amazons. The story ran as follows. Some of the Amazons who lived on the river Thermodon in north-eastern Asia Minor, sailed to the Sea of Azoff in Greek ships, and landed in the Scythian territory. Here they seized the first herd of horses they happened to fall in with, mounted them without hesitation, and began to ravage the Scythian lands. The Scythians themselves knew not what to make of the invaders. The language, dress, and nation of the new comers were totally unknown; but, conjecturing that they were only a smaller species of men, they, at last, gave them battle; and when they came to plunder the bodies of the dead, they discovered that their enemies were women. This, indeed, was not their only discovery. The Amazons were found to be exceedingly handsome; and many of the Scythian young men determined, if possible, to get one of these warlike, but attractive, damsels for a wife. Accordingly, a band of Scythian youth, about equal in number to the Amazons, marched out, and encamped near their fair foes for the purpose of picking up an acquaintance. The ladies, finding that the gentlemen did not come to molest them, began to entertain sentiments corresponding to those of their admirers; and, in short, every day the two camps drew gradually closer and closer to each other. At last, one day, a Scythian saw an Amazon walking alone at some distance from her camp, and immediately introduced himself by laying his arms at her feet. Of course, they could not speak each other's language; but they appear to have made signs which answered as well as notes of admiration; and the Amazon gave the Scythian youth distinctly to understand that she accepted him as her lover. The intimacy, once commenced, soon became general. The two camps were joined together, and every Scythian young

man took for his wedded wife the first Amazonian damsel to whom he was introduced.

According to the same legend, the young men were unable to learn the language of their Amazonian wives; but the latter attained the language of their husbands with a celerity which was perfectly marvellous. When both parties were thus enabled to understand each other, the husbands said to the Amazons, "We have parents and flocks and herds; let us therefore maintain ourselves no longer by hunting and by pillaging, as we are doing at present, but let us return to our nation, and live with our people. We have chosen you for our wives, and we will take no others." The Amazons replied, "We never could live with the Scythian women, for our customs are widely different. We shoot with the bow, throw the javelin, and ride on horseback; we have never learnt the employments of women. On the other hand, the women of your country never follow the avocations which we pursue, but remain in their waggons and employ themselves we know not how. If, then, you really desire to keep us as your wives, and to prove yourselves honest and sincere in your affection for us, go at once to your parents, claim your share of the family possessions, and then return to us, and let us live by ourselves."

The Scythian young men yielded to this appeal, and acted accordingly; but when they came back to the Amazons, the latter thus addressed them:—"We are afraid, after all, that we cannot live in this country; for not only have we deprived you of your parents, but we have likewise committed great depredations in their territory. Let us therefore leave this region, which belongs to the Scythians, and go over the Don for a three days' journey towards the north-east." This proposal was also accepted by the Scythian husbands, and accordingly they and their wives proceeded to the country which we have already indicated.

From henceforth these Scythians and Amazons, and all their descendants, went by the general name of Sauromatæ. The wives still retained their ancient mode of living, and hunted with their husbands, joined in all their wars, and wore the same costume; and, according to their laws, no maiden was allowed to marry until she had killed an enemy.

Southward of the Sauromatæ were the savage tribes inhabiting the Caucasus, between the Black Sea and the Caspian. They lived chiefly on the produce of wild fruit-trees, and were still more uncivilised than the Scythians, the marriage tie being either unknown or else altogether disregarded. They wore woollen garments, and had a curious way of painting figures on their dress with a dye which they made from the leaves of certain trees, and which would never wash out.

Northward of the Sauromatæ were a great and numerous people called Budini and Geloni, whose country extended from the river Don to the river Volga; but as the great caravan route from Olbia into the interior ran right through their territory, we will defer our description until we have made a few remarks upon the commerce of Olbia.

We have already mentioned that Olbia was the emporium of the ancient trade on the Black Sea. The caravan route led from Olbia generally in an easterly direction over the river Don, then through the country of the Budini, next over the Ural Mountains, and lastly through the northern part of the Khirgis steppe, towards the distant heights of the Altai, on the borders of Siberia. Most of the nations along this route lived by hunting, and supplied the travelling merchants with valuable furs, for which there was always a great demand in more civilised countries. Other tribes obtained gold in large quantities, and in an unknown and mysterious manner; but were always ready to barter it for wine, oil,

linen, smart articles of dress, or swords and daggers of glittering steel. This precious metal was indeed as great an object of attraction to the daring merchants of the ancient world, as it is in the present day to the adventurous emigrants in California or Australia.

But, eager as Herodotus was for information concerning the earth and its inhabitants, he did not care to accompany a caravan through those distant and dangerous regions. Indeed, if he had been ever so much inclined to brave the perils of the way, he could not have gone without first communicating with his father. The journey would have occupied several years; and, as it was, an entire year would have elapsed since he had left Athens, before he could return to that city and receive any communication from Lyxes. At the same time the hearsay information that he could get from travellers who had performed the journey was very meagre. None of the merchants in Olbia or Byzantium cared to tell any of the secrets of their trade; and a few scattered accounts of the strange manners of some of the tribes whose seats were traversed by the caravans, were all that Herodotus could collect; and such as they were we will endeavour to explain as we best may to our curious readers.

The first nation traversed by the caravan after leaving Olbia and the Scythian territory, was the nation of the Budini. Like all northern nations these people were distinguished by their clear blue eyes and red hair. They were aborigines of the country, and led the same kind of wandering life as the Scythians; especially they passed part of their time in catching otters and beavers, which were very plentiful in a large lake in their territory, and whose skins were much esteemed by the traders. The most singular circumstance connected with the Budini was the fact that in the very centre of their country was a square wooden town called Gelonus, which was surrounded by a high wooden wall nearly four miles in

length on each side. The houses and temples in this town were all made of wood, and the temples were erected in honour of Greek gods, and adorned after the Greek fashion with wooden images, altars, and shrines. The inhabitants of this town were called Geloni; and from what our traveller heard concerning them, he presumed them to have been originally Greek settlers who had been expelled from the regular Greek trading marts, and subsequently settled amongst the Budini, where, indeed, they spoke a language half Greek and half Scythian.

The caravan route passed through the country of the Budini in a northerly direction, and after that traversed a desert which was a seven days' journey across. Beyond the desert the route turned once more towards the east, and entered the country of the Thyssagetæ, a people who lived entirely by hunting. Next the Thyssagetæ was a nation called the Jyrcæ, who also lived by hunting, and who practised it in a very peculiar manner. The huntsman climbed a tree and stood there in ambush, whilst his horse and dog were ready beneath; the horse having been trained to lie upon its belly so that it might not easily be seen. When the huntsman saw any game he shot an arrow, threw himself upon his horse, and followed the game with his dog. These Jyrcæ seem to have inhabited the Ural Mountains. Eastward of them was the great Khirgis steppe, stretching far away to the east. In the time of our traveller the northern part of this steppe was occupied by the Argippæi, who were evidently the same as the modern Calmucks, a principal branch of the Mongols. Herodotus was told that the Argippæi lived at the foot of lofty mountains, and were all, both men and women, bald from their birth, and had flat noses and large chins. Their diet chiefly consisted of the fruit of a tree named Ponticon, which was about the same size as the fig-tree. The fruit it produced was similar to beans, only the fruit had a stone inside. When the fruit was ripe the

Argippæi beat it through cloths, upon which a thick black liquor was strained out called aschy. This they sucked or took mixed with milk, and from the mass of fruit remaining after the straining process, they made a sort of cake, which formed their principal food. They had very little cattle, for their pastures were not good. Each man dwelt under a tree, over which, in the winter time, he spread a thick white covering of felt cloth. The whole tribe was accounted sacred; its members possessed no implements of war, but yet no one ever attempted to do them any injury. They arbitrated in the disputes of the neighbouring nations, and whoever took refuge amongst them had nothing to fear.

The modern reader who may be acquainted with the habits and manners of the Calmucks, will be amused at seeing how some of the characteristics of the race were preserved by those who informed Herodotus respecting the Argippæi of twenty-three centuries ago. The Calmucks still eat a fruit called the bird's cherry, in almost the same manner as was described to Herodotus. They dress the berries with milk, then press them in a sieve, and afterwards form them into a thick mass which is called "moisun chat," a small piece of which, mixed with water, makes a nutritious and palatable soup. The people still live in tents, or moveable huts, called kybitkas, but make them in a more artificial manner than they did in ancient times; and, indeed, it would almost appear that our traveller's informants had made some mistake about the trees which supported the felt covering, as there are very few to be found in this region. The peacemakers were most probably Calmuck priests.

Eastward from the Argippæi were the Issedones, a people who, according to the story told Herodotus, observed very extraordinary ceremonies in connection with death. When a man lost his father, all his relations brought small cattle and killed them, and then cut up

the flesh, together with the dead body of the parent, and mingled the whole together, and had it served up for dinner. The skull, however, was carefully cleaned and gilded, and the relatives afterwards regarded it as a most sacred object, and performed great sacrifices to it every year; for the Issedones, like the Greeks, celebrated the anniversary of their father's death. The people generally were accounted to be very just in their dealings with the merchants of the caravan, but the ladies seemed to take care of all the property, and indeed were evidently possessed of the same power and authority as their husbands.

Southward of the Issedones, and along the northern bank of the river Jaxartes, were a nation named the Massagetæ, who resembled the Scythians in their dress and manner of living, and had, indeed, originally driven them over the river Volga, and obliged them to settle in Southern Russia. This people had both cavalry and infantry, archers and spearmen, and also carried battle-axes. They employed gold and brass, of which they had great abundance, for everything they used. Spears, arrow-heads, and battle-axes, they made of brass, but they decorated their helmets, belts, and shoulder-pieces with gold. The breastplates on their horses were also made of brass, but the bridle-bits and cheek-pieces were ornamented with gold. Silver and iron they never used, for neither of those metals could be found in their country. Each man married a wife, but wives and husbands all totally disregarded the marriage tie. The Massagetæ fixed no prescribed limit to the extent of human life, but when a man grew to be very old, his kindred assembled together and sacrificed him, together with cattle of various kinds, and having hashed the whole together, they boiled the flesh and feasted upon it. This death they universally accounted to be the happiest, and those who died of disease were buried in the earth, lamenting, in their dying hour, that they could not live long enough to be thus sacrificed and

eaten. The Massagetæ sowed no grain, but entirely subsisted upon their own herds of cattle, and upon the fish which was abundantly supplied by the river Jaxartes. Their principal, if not their sole, drink, was milk. Of gods they worshipped only the Sun, to whom they sacrificed horses, thinking it right to offer the swiftest creatures to Helios, the swiftest of gods.

Cyrus the Great, in the last years of his reign, set out with a large army to subdue the Massagetæ, but the expedition turned out equally as unfavourable as the subsequent expedition of Darius, the son of Hystaspes, against the Scythians. Cyrus and his army marched in a north-easterly direction as far as the river Jaxartes,—a large river which falls into the Sea of Aral. At that time the Massagetæ were governed by a queen named Tomyris, and Cyrus sent ambassadors to make her an offer of marriage. Tomyris, being aware that the Persian conqueror only wooed her in the hope of obtaining her kingdom, forbade the approach of the ambassadors. Cyrus, finding that his artifice was ineffectual, openly prepared to make war upon the people, and threw a pontoon bridge over the Jaxartes, and erected fortifications to protect it from the enemy. Tomyris then sent him a herald, suggesting that it would be better for him to retire and reign over his own dominions, and leave her to govern hers; but at the same time stating that if he was anxious to risk a battle with the Massagetæ, he need not trouble himself to construct a bridge, for if he liked to cross over in boats, she and her army would retire for three days' march from the river, and leave him to effect the passage without molestation; or, if he would rather fight on his own side of the Jaxartes, she and her forces would cross over to him, if he would retire for a three days' march.

Cyrus called a council of war, and of course heard a number of conflicting opinions. At last Crœsus, king of Lydia, who had accompanied him during the expedition,

advised that he should request Tomyris to retire, and then conduct his army over the Jaxartes; that he should then advance one day's journey from the river, and prepare a splendid feast in his camp, and leave it under the charge of his worst troops, whilst he himself and the best of his forces retired once more to the river; and that finally, when the Massagetæ had defeated the ineffective forces guarding the camp, and had made themselves heavy and drunken with the good things prepared for them, he himself with his more effective squadrons should fall upon the prostrate enemy and finish him off.

This advice was adopted. Cyrus crossed the Jaxartes and advanced one day's march from its banks into the territory of the Massagetæ. Abundance of cattle were killed and cooked; bowls of unmixed wine were prepared without stint; and every other kind of delicacy, which was likely to attract a barbarian appetite, was spread out in the utmost profusion. The worst conditioned men in the Persian army were then left to guard the camp, whilst Cyrus and the best of his forces retired to the river. A third division of the great army of the Massagetæ marched up, and soon took the camp, and cut the ineffective Persians to pieces; and then seeing the banquet, they laid down and feasted at once, and were soon overpowered by the meat and wine, and fell into heavy slumbers. Cyrus and his main army then advanced upon the prostrate barbarian, and put an immense number to death, and took a still greater number of prisoners; and amongst the latter was Spargapises, the commander-in-chief, and son of the queen Tomyris.

News of this terrible disaster soon reached the ears of the Massagetan queen. She sent a herald to Cyrus with the following message: — "Cyrus, be not elated with your success! For the same poison which you have employed against my people will, when you quaff it,

bring madness to your own brain, and cause evil words to float on your own lips. Be not elated, then, I say, because by such a poison you have conquered my son, instead of meeting him in a fair fight in an open field. Take the good advice I now offer you! Restore my son, and quit this country unpunished for having insolently disgraced the third of our army. If you refuse to do this, I swear by the great Sun-god, the Lord and Master of the Massagetæ, that insatiable as you are, I will glut you with blood!"

This powerful speech fell upon idle ears. Cyrus paid not the slightest attention to its import. Spargapises, the son of Tomyris, having recovered from the effects of the wine, and perceived the plight he was in, begged to be released from his fetters. Cyrus acceded to the request; but as soon as the barbarian prince found his hands at liberty, he put an end to his own existence. Tomyris finding that Cyrus would not listen to her appeal, assembled all her forces and engaged the great Persian conqueror. The battle was said to have been the most obstinate one ever fought between barbarian armies. The Massagetæ first stood at a distance and used their bows; and when they had emptied their quivers, they rushed upon the Persians with their swords and spears. The battle lasted many hours; but at length the Massagetæ got the better of the invaders; the greater part of the Persian army was cut to pieces, and Cyrus himself was slain upon the field. Thus did the avenging Nemesis overtake the Persian.

The present chapter will have enabled the reader to see the extent of the geographical knowledge of the Greeks in the time of Herodotus, in connection with the countries north and east of the Black Sea and the Caspian. It must not, however, be supposed that it includes all the information which reached the ears of our inquiring

traveller; for a variety of other stories of a more fabulous character passed current amongst the caravan traders, and on long winter evenings were frequently retailed out in the caravanserais. Herodotus thus heard that the people inhabiting the mountains northward of the Argippæi had goats' feet, and that northward of them were another people who slept for six months at a time. Similar stories he had heard at Athens, but he attached very little belief to them. Ridiculous, however, as they appeared to him, they evidently had some foundation in truth. The mountaineers of the Ural and Altai secure their joints, and especially their knees, against the frost by means of furs, which may have procured them the name of "goat-footed;" whilst the tradition of the men who slept for six months in the year was based upon some glimmering of the fact that the polar regions continue for six months without the light of the sun. Again, northwards of the Issedones were said to be a people having only one eye, and who were called Arimaspi; whilst beyond the Arimaspi, the region was said to be inhabited by griffins, whose duty it was to guard the great quantities of gold in that neighbourhood from the depredations of the one-eyed gentry. As to the happy race who lived in the genial clime beyond the north wind, and who went by the name of Hyperboreans, they seemed to live only in the brains of the poets, for no traveller could learn any stories of them worthy of relation. Neither have the great Arctic discoverers of the present day ever been able to penetrate that same charmed circle, though all seem assured that it does really exist.

At last the time came when Herodotus was to leave Byzantium. Captain Phylarchus and his partners were in excellent spirits. The ship was well freighted with salt fish, anchovies, bales of fur, and a very fair quantity of gold; whilst her ballast consisted of a cargo of the

finest wheat. Meantime, our traveller bade farewell to all his acquaintance, and having already before he left Olbia distributed his presents amongst the Scythians with a judicious hand, he finally left those distant shores, and once more trod the deck of the Castor and Pollux, bound for the favourite city of bright-eyed Athena.

CHAP. XXVIII.

ATHENS, B. C. 458.

HERODOTUS LANDS AT THE PIRÆUS.—THE GREAT DIONYSIA.—JOYOUS CELEBRATION OF THE FESTIVAL.—THE PROCESSION OF BACCHANALS.—HERODOTUS FALLS SUDDENLY IN LOVE.—HIS THOUGHTS UPON THE SUBJECT.—BANQUET IN THE HOUSE OF EUPHORION.—TRAGEDIES TO BE PERFORMED IN THE GREAT STONE THEATRE OF DIONYSUS.—ATHENIAN TRAGEDIES.—THE ORESTEIA OF ÆSCHYLUS.—ORIGIN AND CHARACTER OF THE ANCIENT GREEK DRAMA.—THEATRICAL MACHINES.—CHARACTER OF THE ACTORS AND CHORUSES.—STRUCTURE AND ARRANGEMENT OF THE ANCIENT THEATRE.—MODE OF PERFORMANCE.—HERODOTUS'S STUDIES IN THE ANCIENT DRAMA.

It was on a beautiful spring morning that Herodotus landed at the Piræus, after a fair and prosperous voyage from Byzantium. The port was more bustling than ever. The navigation, which during the winter months was almost totally suspended, had been again resumed with unusual activity; and strangers from distant cities were crowding to Athens to join in the celebration of the great Dionysia.

All hail to the joyous festival! The worshippers of the joy-giving Dionysus, the god of the intoxicating vineyard, the god of renovating and overflowing nature, were pouring out their enthusiastic welcomes to the returning spring. Throughout the dreary months of winter, the prisoned deity was struggling and decaying, chilled and dying. Then his impassioned and sympathising worshippers had danced in solemn chorus round his altar, and sung in sad and piercing strains the wild and gloomy dithyramb. But now those lamentations had passed away. The spring was gladdening the earth. The

jovial god had burst forth arrayed in wreaths and garlands. His worshippers were filled with mirth and merriment, and joyously quaffing inspired draughts of life restoring and intoxicating wine.

The fields and groves between Piræus and the city were rejoicing in the returning spring. The citizens and strangers who crowded the streets of Athens were all yielding to the hearty and generous excitement of the festival season. Innumerable guests of all descriptions had poured into the city. Farmers from the rural demes of Attica, and foreigners from the distant states of Hellas; sight-seers and pleasure-hunters; retail traders, jugglers, and strolling mountebanks; all were ready to amuse themselves or amuse others. The taverns were too few and small to accommodate the crowds of visitors; and numerous booths were erected by different hotel-keepers in the streets and public places. The house of Euphorion was filled with relatives and friends; but directly the hospitable host caught a sight of Herodotus he refused to part with him. Accommodation was found, after much jesting and perplexity, for none were turned away during the jolly Dionysia, excepting under circumstances of dire necessity.

The next morning the festival began. The altars and Hermæ figures throughout the city had been wreathed with chaplets of flowers. Huge bowls, filled with the gift of the wine-loving god, had been placed in every thoroughfare, to enable all who pleased to drink of the inspiring juice to their hearts' content. The vast crowd of worshippers in splendid array—their heads crowned with flowers, and carrying in their hands the thyrsus, nr sacred staff, crowned with the leaves of the ivy or the vine—had passed in grand procession through the city to perform the sacrifices to the exhilarating deity, and to sing and dance the dithyrambs of mirth and joy. There were the sacred images borne in the air. Citizens in masks,

disguised as satyrs; noble maidens arrayed as nymphs. All bespoke the rejoicing that spring had come once more with grief-dispelling Dionysus; that satyrs and nymphs, the active and beautiful powers of nature, and the constant companions of the ever-changing god, were once more dancing their merry revels in forest glades. All bespoke the sympathy and enthusiasm of the band of worshippers with the unseen god of nature and his invisible attendants; their desire to indulge in mysterious and unearthly revellings; to plunge into an imaginary world, to throw off self, and to identify themselves with those joyous powers by whom the potent deity was ever surrounded.

Herodotus gazed on the enthusiastic worshippers with mingled feelings. His early education would not permit him to doubt the religious significance of the festival; but a kind of instinctive reserve, for which he could not account, prevented him from taking an active part in the noisy and boisterous orgies. The riotous, though brilliant character of the procession; the exciting music of flutes, cymbals, and drums; the evident drunkenness of many of the satyrs; and the downcast and frightened looks of those noble and exceedingly beautiful nymphs; by turns distracted his attention, without moving him to religious awe and reverence. He could feel no devotion whilst witnessing those wild proceedings. He began to speculate upon the cause of his own utter want of enthusiasm, when a sight met his eyes which thrilled his very soul.

A maiden as lovely as a divinity. Sixteen summers could scarcely have passed over her head, but yet her presence seemed to throw a charm over the whole procession. Herodotus almost fainted from a rapturous sense of her exceeding beauty. He at once hurried along with the procession in the hope that he might be able to save that fair and fragile flower from the rude touch of danger.

Her graceful form took immediate possession of his imagination; he would have given his right hand for one glance of those eyes which were fringed by those exquisite lashes. Suddenly a loud sounding hymn was poured forth by the revellers in front. The maiden started back like a young gazelle. She glanced fearfully around, and the beautiful light of her starlike eyes met the enraptured gaze of our traveller, and enthralled his heart.

"Back! back!" cried the officers, whose duty it was to keep the streets clear for the procession. The crowd pressed round him, and in a moment the beautiful vision had passed away.

Herodotus now began to feel that he had seen the realisation of one of those exceedingly lovely forms which had often haunted his day-dreams. He had often read of nymphs and goddesses, and of love and its wondrous powers, until he himself had anxiously desired to experience the tender passion. When as a boy he had roved the hills of Halicarnassus, he had fondly yearned for the appearance of some exquisite being whom he might love and worship. He had tried to picture to himself what his mother might have been when she was young; and by a curious chain of ideas he had endeavoured to gather from the countenance of Queen Artemisia, some idea of the probable appearance of the youthful Phædra, to whom, as he understood, he was engaged to be married on some future day. The stern countenance and piercing glance of the domineering old dowager were very unfavourable to his forming such a conception of his future bride as would enable him to fall in love with the picture in his imagination. He sighed for some fair and delicate maiden, whose glance should be as soft as his own sentimental emotions; but the sunburnt face of the old queen, her eagle eye, and masculine frame, and above all, her unfeminine and unlovable habit of taking strong wine and indulging in remarkably strong language, were

by no means calculated to excite his fancy or awaken a dormant passion for her unseen daughter.

When he had first commenced his travels, he was perfectly aware that his father's heart was set upon his marrying Phædra; and that even supposing he himself should be able to dissuade Lyxes from the match, yet, if Artemisia desired the marriage, no mortal being in Halicarnassus would ever be able to stand against her indomitable will. He had therefore, as a general rule, restrained himself from indulging in any imaginary matrimonial speculations. The fair Corinthian Melissa had certainly for a few weeks made a strong impression upon him; but the rough manner in which he had been awakened from his dream of love had almost checked all further development of any amatory emotions whatever.

But the maiden whom he saw in that Dionysiac procession was true to his earliest imaginings of perfect loveliness. That her soul was as pure and spiritual as her form was beautiful, he did not for a moment doubt. He was seized with a burning desire to follow her and learn her name and family; but that was totally impossible. The procession had passed far on ahead, and it was sheer madness to attempt to cut his way through the dense crowds of citizens and strangers that lined the streets. He was in no humour now for joining in the general merriment and festivities. He left the city and wandered about for hours amongst the olive groves on the Ilissus to give vent to the current of his thoughts. He found that his newborn love was inextinguishable and unquenchable. He ran over a thousand plans for discovering the maiden; until at last the early shadows of evening began to gather around him, and he hastily returned to the house of Euphorion.

A splendid banquet had been spread for the entertainment of the guests; but though Herodotus sat down to table, his heart was too full to enable him to take his part in

the convivialities of the evening. The delicacies palled upon his taste. The wine heated his brain without enlivening his fancy. Even the joyous songs fell like funeral hymns upon his listless ear. Moreover he had totally forgotten all the principal incidents in his Scythian expedition, concerning which he was perpetually asked a variety of questions. At last he retired to rest, but only to pass a dreaming and feverish night; and when the first dawn of day fell through the shutter in his little chamber, he sprang from his almost sleepless couch in a state of exciting uncertainty as to what was the best course he could pursue. Once or twice he thought of Phylarchus; then again he considered whether it would not be better for him to open his whole heart to Euphorion. Perplexed and harassed, though somewhat cooled by his ablutions, he at length left his chamber and entered the banqueting room where the visitors were rapidly assembling.

On that morning there was a breakfast as jovial as the preceding symposium. Jest followed jest from the mouth of the witty host, and was echoed back by the congenial guests. Herodotus soon recovered his spirits, and regained the appetite which had so strangely left him on the yesterday. The freshness of the morning air, which blew gaily through the interior court, cooled his brow, and cleared his imagination of much of his mad dreaming. It was the morning when the first tetralogy—consisting of three tragedies, or a trilogy, and a satirical drama, all entirely new—were to be performed in the great stone theatre of Dionysus. The general conversation soon turned wholly upon this important topic. Various reports were floating about concerning the subjects of the several tragedies, and the chances of the several dramatic poets who had entered for the prize; and our traveller began to be interested in spite of his distracting passion.

Tragedy was monopolised by the Athenians. Though almost every city in Hellas had its theatre, yet Athens

was the only place where original tragedies were composed and acted; and composers of tragedies would come from different parts of Greece to exhibit their dramas to the Athenian people. Each one of the ten Athenian tribes apppointed a wealthy citizen from amongst their number to be a Choregus, and defray the expense of training the chorus and actors. When a poet had completed a play he applied to the Archons for a chorus; and if the Archons considered his performance to be worthy of representation, they nominated a Choregus to fulfil the requisite duties; and the honour and vanity of each Choregus was greatly interested in obtaining the prize awarded by the state to the successful dramatist.

At the present Dionysia several tetralogies as usual were produced before the Athenian people. The first, which was to be performed on the present morning, was called the Oresteia, and consisted of three tragedies (or a trilogy) and a satirical drama. It was written by the veteran Æschylus, who was then in his sixty-seventh year; and the old man was himself the trainer of his chorus and actors, and produced the piece upon the stage under the general charge of Xenocles the Choregus. Before, however, we accompany Herodotus to the great stone theatre of Dionysus, to behold the performance of the Oresteia, it will be necessary to convey to the modern reader some idea of the origin and character of the ancient drama, and of the arrangement of the theatre and distribution of the actors and chorus.

The drama was regarded by the Greeks as a religious performance, and was a part and parcel of the worship of Dionysus at the Dionysiac festivals. It had, indeed, originally sprung from the old enthusiastic worship of the inspiring deity. We have already noticed the choral dance and song, called the dithyramb, which was capable of expressing every variety of feeling appertaining to the Dionysiac orgies. There were gay and joyous dithyrambs, celebrating

the commencement of spring; and solemn and gloomy dithyrambs, which turned upon the sorrows of the ever-changing god. Tragedy originated with the chief singers of the dithyramb, or leaders of the dithyrambic chorus, who perhaps narrated the perils, escapes, or triumphs of the god, and were accompanied by the other members of the chorus, who expressed their sorrow, their terror, or their joy in the character of satyrs or satellites of Dionysus.

Thus far Tragedy had advanced amongst the Dorians, who therefore considered themselves to be its inventors. All its further development, however, belongs to the Athenians. Thespis, in the time of Pisistratus (B. C. 536), first caused it to became a drama. He brought forward one actor, and thus connected a regular dialogue with the choral representation. This actor, according to the constant practice on the ancient stage, used different masks, and played several parts in the same piece; and of course was enabled to maintain, in each part, a dialogue with the leaders of the chorus. The speeches, however, were doubtless short, as compared with the choral songs, which they served to explain; and the dances of the chorus were still a principal part of the performance, the ancient tragedians in general being teachers of dancing as well as poets and musicians. Gradually the Chorus in the Tragedy acquired a distinctive character from the old Chorus of Satyrs; and the Tragedy became a separate thing from the Satirical Drama. Tragedy constantly inclined to the old heroic legends, in preference to subjects connected with Dionysus; and thus the rude Chorus of Satyrs became no longer an appropriate accompaniment. The Satirical Drama treated of the same class of subjects, but in a rough and farcical manner; and therefore accorded with the presence and participation of rustic and petulant satyrs. Last of all, Æschylus gave the dramatic element its due development, by adding a second and

subsequently a third actor; and thus the Greek tragedy passed from a vigorous infancy to a firm and goodly youth.

The tragedy of antiquity was essentially different from that of later times. It departed entirely from ordinary life, and was in the highest degree ideal. It reproduced the divine and heroic foretime, and brought the Olympian gods themselves upon the stage. The theatre was consecrated ground; the drama was a holy ceremony; the poet was a minister of religion. The members of the chorus were in no respect distinguished from the stature and appearance of ordinary men, but the actors were raised far above the dimensions of mortals. Their persons were lengthened by the high soles of the tragic shoe and the great height of the mask. Their bodies were padded out to a corresponding size, and their voices were raised by mechanical means to the highest pitch. The mask not only concealed the individual features of the well known actor, and enabled the spectators entirely to forget the former in his part, but it gave to his whole aspect that ideal character which the ancient drama demanded; and the half open mouth, the large eye sockets, the sharply defined features in which every characteristic was presented in its utmost strength, the bright and hard colouring, were all calculated to make the impression of a being agitated by the emotions and passions of human nature to a heroic or godlike degree. The dress of the actors and chorus was the Dionysiac festival costume, consisting of long striped chitons reaching to the ground, over which were thrown the himation and chlamys, of purple or some other brilliant colour, with all sorts of gay trimmings and gold ornaments.

The structure and arrangement of the ancient theatre were equally adapted to assist the imagination of the spectator. The vast stone building, open to the sky, would hold 30,000 persons, and was not exclusively

designed for the representation of the drama, but for choral dances generally, and festal processions, revels, and other assemblies. The chorus was stationed in the orchestra or centre of the theatre, answering to the modern pit. Before it rose the enormous crowd of spectators in semicircular lines, one above the other. Behind it was the stage, of immense breadth, but of very little depth; thus according with the prevailing artistical taste, which delighted in long lines of figures, such as we see in ancient pediments and friezes; the figures being placed in perfect outline near each other, but clear and distinct, and rarely so closely grouped as to intercept each other's view. On the back of the stage was the stately scene, consisting of the front of a chieftain's house or of a temple, or representing a camp, a forest, or any other suitable background required by the exigencies of the drama performed. As in Greek life all the main actions of family or political interest took place in the open air and in the view of men, so it was necessary that the heroic individuals personified in the drama should come forth from the interior of the palace or the tent, before giving utterance to their thoughts and feelings.

The stage machinery included two important theatrical machines,—namely, the eccyclema and the periacti. The eccyclema was a platform or small wooden stage, which, in the passages of the drama where the interior of a house was required to be exposed to the spectator's view, was pushed or wheeled forward through the great portal in the stone screen or scene at the back of the stage, and subsequently wheeled back when the interior had to be again withdrawn from view. The periacti consisted of two machines, one on each side of the house or temple represented on the scene. Each periactos was in the form of a triangle, or rather of a triangular prism, and consisted of three different views or prospects fixed on a pivot. Thus, by simply turning the periacti, the land-

scape was entirely changed; for the same temple or house would do as well to represent one locality as another.

The actors, as we have already mentioned, were three in number,—namely, the Protagonist, the Deuteragonist, and the Tritagonist. The chorus occupied the orchestra in the centre of the theatre. In ancient times, before the development of the drama, it had consisted of fifty persons, who danced and sung the dithyramb in a ring round an altar of Dionysus. Subsequently the altar had given place to a raised platform in the centre of the orchestra called the thymele, which served as a resting place for the chorus when it took up a stationary position. The chorus itself had likewise undergone a total change of form. It no longer preserved its independent character and action. It was connected with the action of the stage, and was therefore obliged to front the stage. It consequently ceased to be circular, and became quadrangular; that is, the dancers were placed in rows or ranks. In this form it passed through the wide side entrance of the orchestra between the stage and the audience, and arranged itself in front of the stage in straight lines. Of course, in representing a tetralogy, the whole could not be performing throughout every piece, as it would be impossible for a single chorus to perfect itself in the necessary number of songs and dances. Moreover, two different choruses were sometimes in the orchestra at the same time. Accordingly, the fifty persons supplied by the Choregus, and forming a dithyrambic chorus, were distributed by Æschylus in the following manner: twelve were set apart for the Agamemnon, fifteen for the Chœphorœ, fifteen for the Eumenides, and eight for the satirical drama of Proteus.

To say that Herodotus was exceedingly fond of the drama would be merely to say that he shared in the general and enthusiastic love for theatrical representations which was rapidly increasing amongst his countrymen. He had studied many of the works of the early Greek tra-

gedians whilst residing at Samos, and had seen many of them brought upon the Athenian stage at previous festivals. He had laughed heartily at the satirical dramas of Chœrilus, and been moved almost to tears by the lyrical dramas of the pathetic Phrynichus. Above all, too, he had read that deeply moving tragedy by the latter author, entitled "The Capture of Miletus," which was based upon the slaughter and slavery which had befallen the Milesians when the Persians took their city at the conclusion of the Ionian revolt. A more pathetic tragedy was never produced upon the stage; and when it was represented before the Athenian people for the first time, the whole audience burst into tears; and the poet was fined 1000 drachmas for renewing the memory of that mournful event; and it was decreed by the popular assembly that the drama should never again be represented in public.

Singularly enough, however, our traveller had never been made acquainted with the works of Æschylus. It was therefore by no means wonderful that he determined to join the party of Euphorion, and endeavour, for a few hours at least, to suppress his emotions. The trilogy, which was to be performed on that day for the first time, was said to be the sublimest and most magnificent composition that had ever appeared. It is true that he had no chance of seeing the beautiful maiden who had won his heart on the previous day; for at that time it was considered scarcely respectable for ladies of reputation to be seen at the theatre. But if he stopped away, he would only be seriously rallied, and perhaps questioned concerning his absence; and on that day of general festivity he could not hope to succeed in any inquiries he might set on foot. When, therefore, Euphorion kindly informed him and the other guests that he had obtained tickets sufficient to accommodate them all on the best seats, our traveller heartily thanked him for his courtesy, and expressed the pleasure which he should feel in joining his party.

CHAP. XXIX.

ATHENIAN THEATRE, B. C. 458.

GATHERING OF THE ATHENIAN PEOPLE TO THE GREAT STONE THEATRE OF DIONYSUS. — PRICES OF ADMISSION. — NO PLAYBILLS REQUIRED. — TRILOGY OF THE ORESTEIA FOUNDED ON THE LEGENDS CONNECTED WITH THE HOUSE OF ATREUS AT MYCENÆ. — STORY OF AGAMEMNON AND CLYTÆMNESTRA. — ARRANGEMENT OF THE ORESTEIA. — DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLOT. — DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PERFORMANCE OF THE THREE TRAGEDIES, AGAMEMNON, CHŒPHORŒ, AND EUMENIDES.

It was still in the freshness of early morning that the Athenian citizens poured through the streets towards the great theatre of Dionysus, on the southern slope of the Acropolis. The ticket of admission was three obols, or four-pence half-penny sterling to the best seats, and one obol or three half-pence to the others; and if any citizen was too poor to afford the price of admission, he could demand two obols from the public treasury to enable him to be present at the two days' representation. An enormous concourse soon filled the long semicircular lines of seats which rose above the orchestra. Above them was the clear blue sky, only to be hidden by an immense awning, if the warm spring sun should become too hot and powerful. The orchestra beneath them was empty. The scene was covered by a curtain. No glare of gas-light stimulated their senses; no cares of the day occupied their thoughts. They had come in the first breath of the morning, and beneath the health-giving light of the glorious Sun god, to witness the first performance of the sublimest dramas that an uninspired mortal has ever yet conceived.

The Athenian citizen required no playbill. The painted scene would be sufficient to announce the locality; the costume of the actor would at once proclaim the personage whom he was representing; whilst the story itself would be derived from some well-known legend of the olden time. The very name of the Oresteia carried back the minds of the audience to the bloody tragedies which had been enacted at Mycenæ, in the old royal house of the Atridæ, and the terrible retributions which had followed. Pelops, the son of the fabled Tantalus, having gained a chariot race in the Peloponnesus, was enabled to establish himself as one of its powerful kings. Subsequently, however, he murdered the charioteer through whom he had obtained the victory, and thus brought a curse upon himself and his descendants; for, as we have already shown in the case of the Alcmæonids, the pious Greek was an implicit believer in the deeply significant doctrine, that the sins of the father were visited upon his children, and that the Erinnyes of the murdered man pursued the murderer to vengeance, or, as we should express it in Christian style, "that the blood of the murdered man cried to Heaven."

Pelops had two sons, Atreus and Thyestes. These murdered their step-brother, Chrysippus, and fled to Mycenæ, where Atreus afterwards became king. Thyestes seduced the wife of Atreus, and was consequently banished. Subsequently, through the machinations of Thyestes, the injured Atreus unwittingly slew his own son, and at once determined to have terrible revenge upon his brother. He pretended to be reconciled to Thyestes, and recalled him to Mycenæ; but having slain the two sons of his brother, he placed their flesh before their father at a banquet, and Thyestes partook of the horrid meal. Thyestes fled with horror. Ægisthus, his son, afterwards slew Atreus, and Thyestes obtained the kingdom of My-

cenæ, but was subsequently expelled by Agamemnon, the son of Atreus.

Such were the horrors connected with the lives of Atreus and Thyestes, the two sons of Pelops. A fresh series were connected with Agamemnon, the son of Atreus, and Ægisthus, the son of Thyestes. Agamemnon, king of the old and wealthy city of Mycenæ, became the richest and mightiest sovereign in the heroic days of Hellas; and his supremacy was acknowledged over all the Peloponnesus. He and his brother Menelaus, king of Sparta, married two sisters; he marrying Clytæmnestra, and Menelaus marrying the celebrated Helen. When the Trojan prince Paris carried off the beautiful Helen, the Greek chiefs determined to recover her, and made Agamemnon their commander-in-chief. After the capture of Troy, Agamemnon returned to Mycenæ with the beautiful prophetess Cassandra, the daughter of Priam, whom he had received as his captive prize, and made his concubine. The curse, however, was still hanging over the head of the powerful and triumphant sovereign. When the armament had just set out for Troy, a pestilence had seized the army, and adverse winds had prevented the sailing of the fleet. Calchas the seer had then declared that Agamemnon had offended the goddess Artemis, and that the sacrifice of his daughter Iphigenia would alone propitiate the angry deity. Agamemnon was forced to yield. Iphigenia was sacrificed, and the pestilence and adverse winds were removed. The maiden, however, was said to have been saved by the goddess, and fresh retribution was required from the house of Agamemnon. At the conclusion of the siege of Troy, which alone occupied ten years, Agamemnon returned with Cassandra, his captive and his mistress, to his royal palace at Mycenæ; but scarcely had he entered his doors when he was murdered by his jealous wife

Clytæmnestra and her guilty lover Ægisthus, the son of Thyestes.

For seven years Ægisthus and Clytæmnestra reigned over Mycenæ. Orestes, the son of Agamemnon, had fled to Phocis; but Electra, a daughter, still remained in the palace. In the eighth year from the murder Orestes returned, and concerted a plan with his sister Electra for avenging the death of their father; and accordingly he put to death both Clytæmnestra and her paramour Ægisthus.

The ORESTEIA was based upon the latter portion of this series of crimes. It consisted of a trilogy of three tragedies, namely: the Agamemnon, containing the murder of Agamemnon; the Chœphoræ, containing the mortal revenge of Orestes; and the Eumenides, containing the pursuit of Orestes by the avenging Erinnyes or Eumenides. To these was added a satirical drama named Proteus; and the four together formed the tetralogy. In consequence, however, of the destruction of Mycenæ by the Argives, and the recent alliance of Athens with Argos, the poet had substituted Argos for Mycenæ throughout the entire trilogy; and, indeed, the conquest of Mycenæ must be supposed to have transferred all its mythic splendour to the Argive city.

But to return to Herodotus and the assembled thousands in the Dionysiac theatre. The musicians took their places in the orchestra and played appropriate musical introductions. At last the curtain was slowly let down and rolled round a roller underneath the stage, and the performance commenced with the representation of the AGAMEMNON, the first play in the trilogy.

The scene was a magnificent representation of the front entrance of the royal palace of Agamemnon. On the battlements was a watchman who made known that he had been stationed by Clytæmnestra to watch for a beacon fire which should proclaim the capture of Troy

and the approaching return of Agamemnon. Suddenly he saw the beacon and hailed it with shouts of rejoicing; but even as he went to tell the news to Clytæmnestra, he confessed that a heavy burden was laid upon his tongue, and that if the walls could speak they would say strange things.

The chorus, which in the present play consisted of the council of twelve old men appointed to govern Argos in the absence of her sovereign Agamemnon, now marched slowly through the side door between the stage and the audience towards the thymele in the centre of the orchestra, solemnly singing, in march time, how that it was the tenth year since Zeus, the protector of hospitality, had sent Agamemnon and Menelaus with a thousand war ships against the seducer of Helen, who had thus brought many woes both on Trojans and on Greeks. Suddenly the old men perceived that all the altars throughout the city of Argos were blazing with sacrifices. At last they reached the thymele, and arranged themselves in files, and then they sang the first choral hymn, in which they related, in piercing and mysterious strains, the thrilling story of the sacrifice of Iphigenia; and the wild notes of the music seemed to bring the terrible circumstance before the entire assembly — the shrieks and gagging of the unhappy maiden, her saffron vestments and piteous glances, all mingled with sad misgivings of the dark future.

Clytæmnestra next appeared upon the stage arrayed in the splendid robes belonging to a queen of the heroic foretime. She told the chorus of old men that Troy was taken, and that the tidings had been brought by a line of beacon fires darting their light from Ilium to Argos. The old men yielded for awhile to the influence of the stirring news and blazing sacrifices, but soon returned to their previous forebodings. They mourned the thousands which Hellas must have lost during the protracted siege.

They pictured the mothers who would wait at the gates of Argos to greet their returning sons, but who would only receive the vases which contained their ashes, or the news that their lost ones lay beneath a foreign and a hostile sod. Then, still with the same melancholy music, they foretold the hatred of the people and the resentment of the Erinnyes, which would be excited by the ambition of the conquering Agamemnon; and at last they even began to doubt the tale of the fire-courier's telling.

Clytæmnestra, who during this choral hymn had passed from the stage to the interior of the palace, now again appeared through a door, and told the chorus that a herald was approaching Argos, who would be able to declare whether the tidings were true. The herald came on the stage and confirmed the glorious news; but still the old men could not conceal their fear for the future, or their distrust of Clytæmnestra; and they sung an ominous ode, in which, whilst ostensibly speaking of Paris and Helen, it was evident that their thoughts were continually reverting to Ægisthus and Clytæmnestra.

A splendid spectacle next took possession of the stage. The mighty and victorious Agamemnon approached in his chariot, accompanied by Cassandra, and surrounded by a crowd of richly dressed trophy bearers and other attendants. Clytæmnestra received him as a conquering hero, and with every appearance of warm affection; but he replied with a coldness and indifference, as though she were his queen and nothing more. She ordered her female attendants to bring costly purple carpets and lay them down for him to walk on from his chariot to the interior of his palace; and at last he yielded to her wishes in this respect, though he feared that such external grandeur and luxury might excite the jealous wrath of some far-seeing deity.

The stage being thus cleared, the chorus sang another Choral Hymn, expressive of renewed and indescribable fears.

Suddenly a most thrilling and awful scene took place. The prophetess Cassandra, who had hitherto attracted but little notice, awoke to a consciousness of her position and fate, and was filled with the prophesying spirit of Apollo. Clytæmnestra had called upon her to enter the palace, but she had made no reply, and the queen had left her. She now shrieked out that she knew all the horrors that belonged to the godless house of Atreus, and that another bloody tragedy was being at that moment enacted within the palace. Her mysterious ravings were answered by responsive hymns from the chorus. She lamented her own fate, and the fall of Troy. Then she descended from the chariot, and slowly and with frightful starts, as though she saw some dreadful spectacle before her, she entered the crime-stained walls of the royal house of Agamemnon.

The chorus was once more alone. Suddenly the cry of Agamemnon from within reverberated through the air. The old men knew not what to do. At last the portal of the palace was again opened. The platform of the eccyclema was wheeled through it and displayed to the audience the royal bathing chamber, with the silver laver, and the dead bodies of Agamemnon and Cassandra; whilst the murderess Clytæmnestra, besprinkled with blood, and holding in her hand the reeking weapon, stood with haughty triumph and defiance over her bleeding victims. The play concluded with the reprobation of the chorus, and the cold-blooded and exulting speeches of Clytæmnestra and her paramour Ægisthus, who offered some palliation of their bloody deed, by exhibiting it as an act of retribution, and by representing the guilt of Agamemnon, and the merited curse that haunted the whole race of the Atridæ.

The curtain was then drawn up, and after a suitable interval of time, during which eight years was supposed to have passed away, it was again unrolled for the per-

formance of the CHŒPHORŒ, the second play in the trilogy of the Oresteia.

The scene represented the front of the royal palace as before, together with the tomb of Agamemnon. Orestes, the son of Agamemnon and Clytæmnestra, appeared in company with his friend Pylades, and placed a lock of his hair upon his father's tomb. Soon Orestes saw approaching a sad procession of Chœphoræ, or "libation bearers," consisting of captive Trojan maids, dressed in sable vestments. The maidens were accompanied by his sister Electra; and as he thought that their intention was to soothe the anger of the dead, by pouring libations upon the tomb, he stepped aside with Pylades, in order to satisfy his curiosity.

The female libation bearers formed the chorus of the present play. Clad in the black habiliments of woe, and bearing vessels with libations in their hands, they moved not towards the orchestra, but from the royal palace towards the tomb of Agamemnon. They sang a choral ode in which they declared the reason of their coming. A fearful dream had scared the guilty Clytæmnestra, and the diviners had declared that the dead were crying from their graves for vengeance. The terror-stricken queen had accordingly sent the female captives to appease with offerings the spirit of her murdered husband. The females now declared their unwillingness to obey, and their conviction that such offerings would never satisfy justice. The blood that had been drank by Mother Earth, the gore that cried for vengeance, was too fast clotted to be ever washed away, and all the streams of all the rivers flowing in one course would fail to purify the foul hand of the murderess.

Electra next came forward and asked the maidens to be her counsellors, as they were her associates in the suppliant procession. What prayers could she offer to her father Agamemnon when she poured the funereal

drink offerings upon his tomb? She dared not say that she brought them from a dear wife to a dear husband, nor could she offer the libations in silence. The chorus determined to invoke blessings upon all who loved Agamemnon, and to pray that some divinity or mortal would avenge his death. Electra then approached the tomb, and called upon the mighty Hermes, god of the realms below, and leader of the dead, to summon all the subterranean powers to hear her prayer; and then pouring the libations over the grave, she implored her father to take pity upon her and her loved brother Orestes, and she formally conjured his spirit to appear from below the earth and be his own avenger upon the guilty murderess.

The chorus next sang a short impassioned ode, in which they gave utterance to their own grief for the murder of Agamemnon, and their dark presentiment of approaching retribution. Suddenly the lock of Orestes' hair was discovered upon the tomb, and, after a little while, Orestes himself came forward and made himself known to Electra; and then the brother and sister—"the old eagle's orphaned progeny"—united with the chorus around the tomb, and invoked the aid of the departed. Orestes declared that he was constrained by the Delphic oracle and the subterranean gods to avenge the death of his father, or else to suffer the most fearful pains of body and soul. The chorus, together with Electra and Orestes, lamented in turns the death of Agamemnon, and especially mourned his unworthy and ignominious end and dishonourable burial; and they mingled their wailings with prayers to the subterranean powers and to the shade of the hero himself, to assist in the coming revenge.

Orestes then asked what had moved the soul of Clytæmnestra to send the libations to her husband's tomb. The chorus related the hideous visions that had haunted the sleep of the royal murderess. She had dreamed that she had given birth to a serpent and offered it the breast;

upon which the ravening monster had drawn forth blood and milk. Orestes considered that the dream was accomplished in himself, and that he was the serpent who would bite the breast of Clytæmnestra. He then directed his sister Electra to return to the palace, and arranged the mode of his proceeding. Electra returned to the royal house, and the chorus struck up an appropriate choral hymn, whilst Orestes and his mute companion Pylades retired to disguise themselves.

At the conclusion of the hymn, Orestes and Pylades appeared upon the stage and knocked at the door of the palace. On the coming of the servant, Orestes asked for a night's lodging; and Clytæmnestra came through the door at that moment, and offered them every hospitality that the house afforded. Orestes being effectually disguised, declared that he was charged by a native of Phocis to bring the message that Orestes was dead, and that, if his friends pleased, they might fetch the brazen urn which contained his ashes. Clytæmnestra, Orestes, and Pylades went through the door of the palace and disappeared from the stage. The chorus sang another significant and prayerful strain. Then an old nurse appeared, and told that the queen had sent her to fetch Ægisthus, that he might see the strangers face to face, and be more assured of the truth of their tale. She declared that Clytæmnestra exhibited a secret joy upon the occasion, and that Ægisthus would hear the tidings with a light heart. She artlessly bewailed the death of her fosterling Orestes; and some relief was afforded to the general sensation of dread by her simple and affectionate lamentations. The chorus gave her to understand that perhaps she might be mistaken, and directed her to tell Ægisthus to come immediately without his body guard. The chorus then struck up another hymn, summoning all aiding gods to come to the assistance of Orestes.

Ægisthus next appeared upon the stage on his way to

the palace, and asked the maidens of the chorus whether there was any confirmation of the rumour of the death of Orestes. They replied by urging him to go within and well question the messengers. He departed through the door, and soon his death cry was heard from within. A servant rushed from the palace, and declared that Ægisthus was murdered, and loudly called for Clytæmnestra. The queen came upon the stage, and learned the cause of the clamour. Orestes and Pylades appeared dragging the dead body of Ægisthus through the palace doorway. A terrible and thrillingly exciting dialogue followed between Clytæmnestra and Orestes. She bewailed her loved Ægisthus. He replied that, as she loved him living, she should accompany him to the tomb. She pointed to her breasts that had nourished him, and he would fain have spared her. Pylades, however, bade him remember the oracle of Apollo and his own vows, and he thereupon threatened Clytæmnestra with instant death, since she had loved Ægisthus whom she ought to have loathed, and hated Agamemnon whom she ought to have loved. The scene became more and more intensely harrowing. The mother urged upon the son that she had nursed his childhood, and bade him beware of her curse and her avenging Erinnyes. The son felt that he was constrained by the gods, and by the sacred laws of blood revenge, to take away the life of his guilty mother. He drove her into the palace, and there the second murder was committed, and the spirit of Agamemnon was appeased.

The choral hymn now declared that justice had arrived, that the house of Atreus was once more raised up, and that day was once more dawning upon it. The central door in the scene again opened, the eccyclema was wheeled in, and the interior of the palace was exposed; and Orestes was seen standing over the bodies of his father's murderers, holding in his hands the fatal garment. Orestes soon reeled under the strong revulsion of feeling. He felt his

mind giving away; but whilst reason yet remained he conjured all present to bear him witness that he had not shed his mother's blood unjustly. He declared that he must once more flee from Argos, and hasten to Delphi for refuge. The chorus hailed him as the liberator of Argos. But he started back. He saw the terrible Erinnyes of his slaughtered mother appearing before him. The chorus told him that they were the phantoms of his disordered brain, but he proclaimed them to be substantial horrors. The chorus assured him that there was atonement for him, and that if he could but touch the altar of Apollo he would be free from his sufferings; and the second tragedy in the trilogy concluded with the flight of Orestes from the avenging Erinnyes of Clytæmnestra.

After a suitable interval, and whilst the interest of that vast audience was fully excited by the awful scenes in the latter part of the Chœphorœ, the performance of the EUMENIDES was commenced, being the third and last play in the trilogy of the Oresteia.

The whole stage was covered by a curtain, but a few columns in front showed that it was intended to represent the great temple of Delphi. The Pythoness entered the orchestra, which was thus supposed to represent the court in front of the temple; and here she offered up the usual invocation to all the gods connected with the oracle. Presently she left the orchestra to enter the temple, but soon returned, shrieking with fright and horror. She declared that she had seen a man under a curse, clinging as a suppliant to the altar, holding in his hands a sword dripping with recent murder and a branch of olive wreathed with white wool. But most direful sight of all, she said she had also seen an unearthly crew of Gorgon-like women sleeping around the suppliant on the several seats. This terrible brood snorted with breathings unapproachable, and from their eyes distilled pestiferous poisons.

At that moment the curtain was drawn down, and the whole interior of the Delphic temple was presented to view, disclosing the sacred tripod and the omphalos. Orestes was clinging to the omphalos. Behind him in the background stood the god Hermes. Around him were sleeping the awful Erinnyes or Eumenides, who formed the chorus throughout the play. The old and hideous figures of the Erinnyes were frightful to the last degree. Their hair was represented by snaky folds. Their tongues were pendent, and their mouths were grinning. Their black garments marked them for children of the night, whilst they yelped in their sleep like blood-hounds thirsting for their prey. The god Apollo then entered the temple, carrying the bow in his left hand. He assured Orestes of his protection, and pointed out how he had thrown the hideous Erinnyes into a deep sleep. He directed him to fly immediately to Athena's city, and there embrace the ancient image of Pallas-Athena; and promised him that his cause should there be tried before just judges, and means should be found for freeing him from his toils. He then directed the god Hermes, the divine conductor, to take charge of the suppliant, and guide him in safety to Athena's city.

Hermes now led away Orestes. At this moment the spectre-like shade of Clytæmnestra ascended through a trap door in the floor of the stage, and found the Erinnyes locked in slumbers. She complained that she was forced to endure the utmost contumely and the most dreadful things from her fellow-dead, and yet not one god was touched with wrath to avenge her murder. She declared that often at the midnight hour, when no other deities were worshipped, they, the Erinnyes, had tasted her offerings, had drank her libations, and partaken of her sober sacrifice; yet now they trampled upon them all, the matricide had fled, and they were soundly slumbering. The chorus of Erinnyes moaned, and she continued her

reproaches; they groaned aloud, and she renewed her efforts to rouse them; at last they groaned yet louder, and cried in their sleep, "Seize him! seize him! seize him!" Clytæmnestra again called upon them to give chase, and pursue the murderer with their fiery vengeance; and then they all sprung from their sleep in hurry and confusion, and awoke to a sense of their position.

The chorus of Erinnyes now sung their first Ode. In the first strophe they reproached themselves with suffering the murderer to escape; but during the remainder they all united in reproaching Apollo with having harboured a godless and blood-stained suppliant. They charged Apollo and all the Olympian deities who belonged to the younger dynasty of Zeus, with exercising might over right, in defiance of the more ancient gods of the dynasty of Cronos, to which they themselves belonged. They furiously and wildly complained that Apollo, though a prophet, had defiled his own shrine with domestic pollution; but they wrathfully declared that he should never deliver Orestes, for that go where the suppliant would, they, the avenging Erinnyes, would still hound him.

Apollo was aroused by these insults. He charged the infuriated goddesses to begone from his prophetic shrine upon pain of receiving a feathered serpent from his golden bow. He desired them to go to more congenial halls, where there were beheadings, and eye gougings, and abortions, and butcheries, and where they might feast with delight and exultant revel; for that it would be better that they should find a home in the cave of some blood-sucking lion, than that they should tarry and pollute his holy oracle. An angry dialogue ensued, and the Erinnyes then retired. The scenery was now shifted to the temple of Pallas-Athena at Athens. The omphalos disappeared through the floor of the stage, and the image of Pallas arose in its place. The periacti on each side of the temple were turned round, and the landscape no longer

represented the neighbourhood of Delphi, but the neighbourhood of the Athenian Acropolis. Orestes was the first to enter the temple. He entreated the goddess Athena to receive him propitiously; for though he had been unable to appease the slain, and remove the Erinnyes of Clytæmnestra, yet he had received the rites of expiation from Apollo at Delphi, and thus been purified from his guilt, and admitted into friendly intercourse with his fellow men. He likewise told the goddess that he had passed over sea and land according to the oracular command of Apollo, in order to approach her temple and her image; and that there he would keep his station, and await the event of justice to decide upon whether he should be delivered from the Erinnyes, or be given up to their avenging hands.

The terrible chorus of Erinnyes next entered the orchestra in two long lines, and then parted right and left as if engaged like bloodhounds in tracking their prey. They declared that they scented the blood of Orestes, and snuffed his coming death. They sung an ode which, like the previous one, was set to several voices, and in which they called upon each other to watch the matricide, lest he should again escape, and to mark him clinging to the image of Pallas-Athena. They told Orestes himself that they would suck the red blood from his limbs, and having wasted him away, would drag him alive to the dens of the damned, there to behold all who had joined against god, or guest, or parent; for mighty Pluto, the judge of mortals, and ruler of the shades below, recorded every human crime.

Orestes then offered up another prayer to the goddess Athena. He told her that manifold evils had made him acquainted with many expiatory ablutions, had taught him when to speak, and when to be silent. He told her that the bloodguiltiness had faded from his hand, that his matricidal pollution had been washed out; for that,

at the hearth of Phœbus Apollo, that radiant god who taught mankind to overcome the terrors of the world of darkness, the blood of sacred swine had wrought his lustration, and he had received atonement and purification. He said that he need not tell her how frequently he had since then held communings with his fellow men without injuring them by the curse which hung over him; but he fervently implored her — Athena, great queen of Attica — to come to his present aid; and he pledged himself and Argos and the Argive people to be a firm and faithful ally to her for ever.

The chorus of Erinnyes then proceeded in solemn march towards the thymele in the centre of the orchestra, singing as they went an earnest strain. They assured Orestes that not all the might of Apollo or of Athena could save him; that he should waste away to a shadow and become the bloodless food of dæmons. Then having arranged themselves on the thymele in rank and file, they sang a mysterious but significant choral hymn to Mother Night, the primal mother-goddess, the daughter of Chaos and sister of Erebus. They addressed her as she who had brought them forth to be a scourge alike to the seeing living and the sightless dead. They bitterly complained that Apollo had dishonoured them by shielding the matricide. They proclaimed, first with passionate vehemence and then with haughty confidence, their indefeasible right to the person of the murderer for ever and for ever, in spite of the dominion of the Olympian deities.

The goddess Athena then entered her temple, arrayed in the peplos, the ægis, and the helmet. She declared that she had heard the cry of Orestes from the banks of the river Scamander. She asked who was the suppliant and who were his unearthly pursuers. A dialogue ensued. Athena heard from the chorus of Erinnyes that they were the daughters of ancient Night, and were called the Furies; that their object was to hunt the

guilty murderer down, and bear him to those dread halls where joy was never named; and that they now gave chase to Orestes as the murderer of his mother, Clytæmnestra. The Erinnyes likewise expressed their willingness to submit the case to the judgment of Athena. Pallas-Athena then called upon Orestes to make known his country, his race, and his misfortunes, and to repel the charge. Orestes replied that he would at once remove her fear that her sacred image was polluted by his hand. He declared that he was not contaminated. It was true that, according to the law, no murderer could hold communion with his fellow man until some friendly hand had cleansed him from the blood-guiltiness by sprinkling him with the blood of a young swine. But these sacred rites had been performed at various places, and the stain had been purged away, both by the blood of victims and the water of flowing streams. As for his race, he was an Argive, and the son of Agamemnon, the leader of naval heroes against the city of Priam. Agamemnon was slain on his return by the dark-souled Clytæmnestra; and he, Orestes, had, by the instigation of Apollo, slain his mother to avenge his father's murder.

Athena then declared that, as protector of her suppliant, Orestes, she could not judge the cause, nor could she dismiss the Erinnyes, lest those awful goddesses should leave a noisome pestilence in the land. The cause, however, demanded an immediate decision. She would therefore appoint her choicest citizens to be sworn judges, and they should not only decide upon the present weighty cause, but should be the sworn judges in all cases of murder for ever after. The chorus of Erinnyes then sang another hymn, in which they declared that if the matricide escaped all men would follow in his crimes; for that none would ever be deterred from deeds of blood through fear of the avenging Erinnyes.

The important trial was now to commence before the

new court of the Areopagus, thus appointed for the first time to try all cases of murder by the goddess Athena. The goddess herself acted as president or judge, whilst the Areopagites were to perform the duties of a jury. The goddess had retired from the stage during the singing of the last choral hymn, and now reappeared in the orchestra followed by a herald. She ordered the herald to proclaim the commencement of the diet, and to command the attention of the Athenian people; and thus the vast audience assembled in the theatre took a part in the representation of the drama. The blasts from the herald's trumpet pealed through the theatre. The newly appointed council of the Areopagites took their seats in the orchestra. Athena broke the silence by calling upon the city then and there to know that her laws, her institutions, and this her solemnly appointed council should endure for ever.

Apollo next entered the orchestra or court of the Areopagites. He declared that he came as purifier and protector of Orestes, and called upon Athena to open the cause. The goddess desired the Erinnyes to state their accusation. The Erinnyes charged Orestes with having murdered his mother. Orestes confessed the deed, and stated that he had been directed by Apollo to avenge the death of his father Agamemnon. Apollo here came forward as a witness. He declared that no oracle had ever been published at Delphi which had not been dictated by Olympian Zeus; and that Zeus had commanded Orestes to avenge the ignominious death of Agamemnon, and that his will was law. A short dialogue ensued between the Erinnyes and Apollo, and then the case was left to the Areopagites; and Athena addressed a solemn speech to the Athenian people in which she conjured them to preserve the court of Areopagus intact and for ever.

At last the twelve judges of the Areopagus completed their deliberations, and, slowly rising from their seats,

advanced towards the balloting urn. The balloting pebbles, white and black, lay on the customary altar; and each Areopagite being provided with each, approached and dropped a pebble into the urn. The pebbles were carefully counted, and amidst the breathless silence of the whole assembly, the votes were declared to be equal. The goddess Athena then threw in her pebble in favour of Orestes, and thus delivered the suppliant from the hands of the vengeful Erinnyes.

Orestes offered up his thanksgivings to Pallas-Athena, to Apollo, and to Zeus the Preserver, who had thus preserved the house of Agamemnon, and restored the exile to his native home. He vowed that from that time henceforth no Argive should ever brandish the spear against the friendly people of Attica. He threatened, moreover, that, should any Argives of a future generation disregard this solemn obligation, his shade should visit them with every species of calamity; but, on the other hand, would be kindly disposed to all who should assist the city of Athena with the confederate spear.

The chorus of Erinnyes then came forward, and uttered in piercing strains their wild imprecations against the gods that were younger; and they threatened to visit the earth with sterility, pestilence, and cursings. Wise Athena succeeded at length in appeasing their wrath. She declared that she alone of all the gods knew where great Zeus kept the keys of his all powerful thunderbolts; but she finally soothed them by promising that henceforth the people of Athens should pay them the highest honours, and sacrifice choice firstlings on their altars. The Erinnyes then sang a hymn, in which they pronounced blessings on the people and their soil. At last, as the shades of evening were falling upon the theatre, a procession was formed of female attendants and the council of Areopagus, who together escorted the Erinnyes by torchlight with music and song to the new sanctuary for the venerable goddesses.

CHAP. XXX.

ATHENS, B.C. 458.

CONCLUSION OF THE PERFORMANCES IN THE THEATRE. — SATIRICAL DRAMA OF PROTEUS. — IMPRESSION UPON HERODOTUS. — FESTIVAL OF THE GREAT PANATHENÆA. — CHARACTER OF THE FESTIVITIES. — THE LAMPADEPHORIA, OR TORCH RACE. — ORIGIN OF THE TORCH RACE. — SCHEMES OF EUPHORION IN REFERENCE TO HERODOTUS. — GRAND PROCESSION FROM THE CERAMEICUS TO THE ACROPOLIS. — HERODOTUS DESIRES INITIATION INTO THE ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES. — PREPARATIONS AT THE LESSER ELEUSINIA. — TEMPLE LEGEND OF DEMETER AND PERSEPHONE, AND THE ORIGIN OF THE MYSTERIES AT ELEUSIS. — MEANING OF THE LEGEND. — SOLEMNITIES OF THE GREAT ELEUSINIA. — PROCESSION ALONG THE SACRED WAY. — AWFUL CEREMONIES OF INITIATION. — UNTIMELY LEVITY.

THE representation of the grand trilogy of Æschylus was at last concluded. The excitement of the vast but highly gifted audience was finding a vent in shouts of applause. Herodotus had been lost in interest and admiration. The vividness of the scenery, the perfect order of the stage machinery, and the splendour of the costumes, bespoke alike the magnificent liberality of a sovereign people and the ostentatious vanity of the Choregus; whilst the significancy of the choral dancing, the religious sublimity of the choral singing, and the exquisite performance of the orchestral music, served to heighten the ideality of the marvellous acting, and thus to give due effect to the chain of lofty but tragical conceptions which belonged to that mighty trilogy.

The three tragedies were followed by a satirical drama named Proteus, which formed the conclusion of the tetralogy. This Satyr-piece was a kind of burlesque, of

which, however, we can only give an imaginary description, as not a fragment of the original drama has descended to posterity. After the capture of Troy, Menelaus had not returned to Greece with Agamemnon, but had wandered about the Mediterranean during eight years, with his newly recovered wife Helen. His conduct, therefore, in roaming along barbaric shores and acquiring fresh stores of wealth, whilst his brother Agamemnon was being murdered and remained unavenged, stands out in very unfavourable contrast with the faithful proceedings of Orestes in his attempt to avenge the death of the mighty hero. The Satyr-piece of Proteus probably turned upon the adventures of Menelaus and his beautiful wife Helen with Proteus the sea dæmon and keeper of the sea monsters; and we can readily imagine how Menelaus might be handled by old Proteus with that serene irony which the Greeks delighted in attributing to beings of his class, and how the wandering, and perplexed, and uxorious sovereign might be a mark for the wayward humours and raillery of the chorus of Satyrs.

It was late in the evening before the theatre was closed, and Herodotus returned to the house of Euphorion. There is no occasion to describe the second day's performances; it will be sufficient to say that the judges of tragic merit gave the prize to the Oresteia of Æschylus before all other rival pieces.

The effect of the performance of the Oresteia upon the mind of Herodotus was of a similar character to the impression produced by the victories in the Olympian games, or the sight of the immortal plain of Marathon. It excited his admiration, but at the same time inflamed his ambition. He was becoming more and more eager to plunge into action and become great. He began to indulge in greater and more frequent speculations concerning the future. His thoughts were perpetually alternating between Athens and Halicarnassus; the fair Phædra and

the beautiful damsel whom he had seen in the Dionysiac procession; the political ascendency of the city of Athena and the political prospects of the city of Artemisia. His old aspirations after mere literary renown were passing away. The drama impressed him exceedingly, and the prize awarded to the veteran dramatist awoke a slight feeling of envy; but he aspired more to be one of those heroes whose actions might be represented on the stage or celebrated in an immortal epic.

Days and weeks passed away, but Herodotus could learn nothing of the Athenian maiden. Every one mistook his description, and supposed it to apply to a different damsel. He resolved upon attending every religious festival and procession where Athenian maidens were permitted to appear, in the hope that he might once again behold the fair object of his affections, and thus be enabled to discover the family to which she belonged.

The budding spring ripened into golden summer, and the time approached for the celebration of the great Panathenæa. The lesser festival of the same name took place once a year, but the great Panathenæa only came round once in four years, and usually fell in the latter part of the month of July. The Panathenæa was celebrated in Attica in honour of the great goddess Athena, in the character of Athena Polias, or protectress of the city. It had been originally established in the mythical times of the Athenian kings, but the distinction between the great and lesser Panathenæa seems not to have been made before the time of the Pisistratids, when every fourth year the festival was celebrated with increased solemnity and magnificence, and thus obtained for it the title of "the great."

The festivities commenced in the usual joyous manner; but Herodotus cared little about them, and only looked forward to the day of the grand procession to the Acropolis. He was present when the rich sacrifices of bulls,

including victims from every deme in Attica, were offered on the great altar of the Acropolis to the protecting goddess of the city. He heard the public herald pray for the welfare and prosperity of the state, and beheld the general feasting of the citizens upon the meat of the sacrifices. He was present at the running matches, and the horse and chariot races; the rival performances of competing musicians, and the enthusiastic emulation of competing choruses; the contests of athletæ, the disputations of philosophers, the recitations of rhapsodists, and the exhibitions of cock fights. But none of these events seemed to afford him the slightest interest or amusement. Indeed, deafened by the general noise, hubbub, and drunkenness, he would gladly have escaped from the whole scene; but Euphorion, with a pertinacious politeness not to be resisted, would insist upon taking his guest to every one of the solemnities, games, and amusements appertaining to the festival, and relating a variety of national traditions connected with each.

One of the religious games, however, certainly did excite some little interest in our traveller, and that was the lampadephoria or torch race. This race took place in the evening after dark, and the course began at the altar of the Three Gods — Prometheus, Athena, and Hephæstus — in the outer Cerameicus, and terminated at the Acropolis, which was nearly half a mile off. The race was not between single men, but between crews or companies, each of whom placed its members at certain intervals along the entire course. When the race was about to commence, a lighted candle was given to the first man in each chain of runners, the candle being fixed in a candlestick shaped like a shield, so as to shelter the flame. The first runner, after running the first stage, gave the candlestick to the second runner, and he in his turn, when he had performed his distance, handed it to the third, and so on until the candlestick reached the goal

at the Acropolis. The art consisted in the several runners carrying the candle unextinguished through their respective distances, for those who suffered the flame to go out lost all share in the honour. The victory was won by that chain of runners in which the lighted candle first reached its goal.

The torch race seems to have been a very ancient game. It probably originally belonged to the worship of Prometheus the Titan, who bore fire from the habitations of the gods, and first bestowed the blessing upon mortal man. But the gratitude of mankind to the giver of fire was soon transferred from Prometheus to the Olympian gods who presided over its use, namely, Hephæstus, who taught men to apply the heat of the fire to the melting and moulding of metal, and Athena, who carried the use of fire through the whole circle of useful and ornamental arts. Thus it was that the torch race was celebrated in honour both of the old artisan Hephæstus and the wise protectress Athena.

During the night which followed the lampadephoria, the couch of Herodotus was unblessed by slumbers. On the next day there was to be the grand procession to the Acropolis, when he confidently expected to gain another and more satisfactory glance at the fair object of his newborn love. It was this excitement which probably prevented him from closing his eyelids; but when he met Euphorion the next morning, and was asked the reason of his pale countenance and somewhat red eyes, he assured his worthy host that the lights in the torch race had been shooting and dancing before him all night, and had prevented Morpheus from visiting his pillow. This answer was of course satisfactory, and directly breakfast was finished Herodotus started out with Euphorion to witness the procession.

It has probably appeared a strange circumstance to our

readers that Euphorion should have taken such an extraordinary interest in the proceedings of Herodotus. In the first place, however, the extensive travels of Euphorion had rendered him superior to the general prejudices of the Athenian people; and during his sojourn at Halicarnassus he had been much impressed with the wealth and influence of Lyxes. In short he felt exceedingly anxious to form a closer connexion with so powerful a family; and he had begun to consider how he might best bring about a union between his guest and his own daughter. It was indeed a very rare occurrence in Hellas for a family in one city to intermarry with a family belonging to another; and foreigners in general were regarded either with suspicion or with a feeling very closely bordering on contempt. This national pride and prejudice was most strongly developed at Sparta, but still it prevailed to a considerable extent in every Greek state. Citizens were bound together by the worship of their guardian deity, in the same way that families were united by the worship of their ancestral head; and this religious union likewise bound together the members of each tribe and race. Athens, however, had been endeavouring to bring all the cities on the coast of Asia Minor and the isles of the Ægean into a powerful and closely knit confederacy, of which she herself should be the supreme head. In spite, therefore, of the Oriental seclusion in which the Greek maidens were generally educated, we may easily conceive that the powerful passion of love, combined with other circumstances, may frequently have led to marriages between the ladies of Athens and some of the rich citizens of the states belonging to the Athenian confederacy. And as Herodotus was not so prejudiced in favour of Halicarnassus as to resist falling in love with a maiden whom he had only seen in an Athenian procession, so we may suppose that Euphorion was not so prejudiced in favour of Athens as to refrain from attempting to marry his daughter to the

only son of a powerful and wealthy Halicarnassian, who might possibly regard the superiority of her blood as equivalent to a munificent dowry. Of course Euphorion was totally unaware that his guest was already engaged to the fair Phædra, and was equally ignorant of the fact that Herodotus had already fallen in love with a young lady of Athens; and his only difficulty was to bring his daughter into the presence of the young Halicarnassian. He was aware that there might be an after difficulty in reference to Lyxes; but clearly his first, and by no means his easiest object, was to bring about a virtuous attachment under his own roof, and then leave matters to take their course.

Having thus explained a little of the Athenian manœuvring, we will accompany Euphorion and Herodotus to the procession of the great Panathenæa. It was the last day of the festival, and the vast crowds of citizens were pressing through the streets towards the Cerameicus in the north-western quarter of the city, from whence the procession was to start. Nearly the whole population of Athens took a part in this great solemnity; but Euphorion, instead of joining it as on previous occasions, preferred accompanying Herodotus to the Agora, through which the procession would pass on its way to the Acropolis.

It is impossible to describe the solemnity in detail. A long and splendid procession of minstrels, priests, and victims, horsemen and chariots, set off from the Cerameicus amidst the stirring sound of appropriate music and loud choral hymns, and winding in enormous throngs through the Agora, at last ascended the Acropolis, to perform the great national sacrifices to their divine protectress in the ancient temple of Athena. There were players on the cithara, the flute, the trumpet, the drum, the cymbals, and every variety of musical instrument known to the ancient world; choral singers sounding

their ancient strains through the clear summer air; priests in their sacerdotal robes, victims crowned with garlands, old men with olive branches, young men arrayed in gleaming armour, and noble maidens of exquisite beauty, wreathed with freshly gathered flowers; whilst high above the heads of the train the sacred Peplos, which was to adorn the holy image of Athena, was stretched aloft in the gay sunshine like a sail upon a mast, so that every eye could see the embroidered tissue of battles, of giants, and of gods, with which it was richly variegated.

It would be incorrect to say that Herodotus was not deeply moved by this magnificent religious procession, which has been immortalised by the chisel of Phidias in the frieze of the Parthenon. Still, his chief attention was directed to the canephori, or "basket-bearers," who took a part in the procession. These beautiful maidens carrying the sacred baskets, containing a sacrificial knife, or the cake and frankincense, or other offerings for the goddess, formed indeed the most attractive portion of the solemnity, and Herodotus regarded them with all the eagerness and excitement of a lover looking for his mistress. At last, to his intense joy, the one whom he so passionately adored suddenly met his view, looking more lovely than ever. She was evidently under the protecting care of an older maiden than herself, who walked by her side. With an instinctive modesty he pointed out the elder to Euphorion, and asked him if he knew the name and family of the damsel.

"What, the elder one?" replied the Athenian; "no, really I know nothing about her; but surely you have a strange taste, my friend, when so many lovelier faces are abroad."

In a very few minutes the vision was again lost to Herodotus. He could not without a breach of politeness leave Euphorion and follow the procession; whilst Euphorion, who, as we have seen, had his own object in view,

was rather surprised, if not chagrined, that the only young lady who had succeeded in attracting the admiration of his guest, should have been the plainest in the whole procession.

It would be anything but enlivening to describe the misery which Herodotus endured on the present occasion, and for some days afterwards. We must turn to other circumstances which were exercising a considerable influence upon his mind and character. We have more than once stated that, according to the Greek notions of religion, he was decidedly a religious man. His mother had brought him up in almost a superstitious veneration for the gods; and he had carefully guarded himself against the insidious scepticism of the Ionian philosophers. His recent constant attendance at temples and public sacrifices, in search of the object of his love, had given a fresh stimulus to this religious turn of mind; and partly from this attendance, and partly from a desire to plunge into any exciting study which would distract his attention from his unfortunate passion, he began to think over and inwardly investigate the more mysterious and occult doctrines connected with the national faith.

In the previous year, and prior to his voyage to Scythia, he had been initiated into the mysteries of the lesser Eleusinia; for the law which confined the mysteries to the natives of Attica had been repealed, and any Greek was admitted who desired to be initiated. Herodotus had taken this step in order that he might be always prepared for initiation into the greater Eleusinian mysteries; for the lesser Eleusinia was in reality only a preparation for the greater, and those who were admitted to this first stage, and who received the name of mystæ, had to wait at least another year before they could be admitted into the great mysteries. The principal rites in the lesser Eleusinia consisted in the sacrifice of a sow, and the purification of the mystæ by the hierophant; and this hiero-

phant, who belonged to the sacred family of the Eumolpids, likewise administered an oath of secrecy to the mystæ, and gave them such preparatory instruction as would enable them to understand the greater mysteries which were to be subsequently revealed.

The lesser Eleusinia took place every year about February, whilst the great mysteries were celebrated in the following September. More than a year and a half had therefore elapsed since Herodotus had been enrolled amongst the mystæ, and he began to seriously contemplate his own initiation into the great mysteries. Before, however, proceeding further upon this subject, it will be necessary to present the reader with an idea as to what the Eleusinian mysteries really were.

The little town of Eleusis was situated on the sea coast about twelve miles to the west of Athens. It was chiefly celebrated as possessing a magnificent temple of Demeter; and it was in this temple and in connexion with the worship of this goddess that the mysteries of Eleusis were celebrated.

Demeter was the goddess of the cornfield. Her worship corresponded in some respects with that of Dionysus, the god of the vineyard; and in the time of Herodotus had become mixed up with many of the wild and enthusiastic rites belonging to the worship of the Phrygian goddess Cybele, to which we have already alluded. The Eleusinian mysteries, however, were comparatively free from this orgiastic character, and therefore seem to have been the remains of an older and purer religion. But before we bring forward this view, we will relate at length the temple legend, which accounted for the origin of the mysteries.

Demeter was the daughter of Cronos, and consequently the sister of Zeus, by whom she became the mother of the celebrated Persephone. Zeus, without the knowledge of Demeter, promised Persephone in marriage to the

gloomy god Pluto, the king of Hades and ruler of the shades of departed mortals; and whilst the unsuspecting maiden was gathering flowers in the Nysian plain in Asia, in company with the Oceanic nymphs, the earth suddenly opened, and she was carried off by Pluto to become his wife in the under-world. Persephone shrieked and invoked the aid of her father Zeus in vain; he had consented to give her to Pluto, and her cries were only heard by Hecate and Helios. The mother Demeter was inconsolable at the disappearance of her daughter, and knew not where to find her. For nine days and nights she wandered about with torches in search of the lost maiden, but without finding the slightest clue to her daughter's fate. On the tenth day she met Hecate, who informed her that she had heard the cries of Persephone, but did not know who had carried her off. The two goddesses then repaired to Helios the sun-god, the "spy of gods and men," who revealed to them that Pluto had carried off Persephone with the consent of her father Zeus.

Demeter was now smitten with anger and despair. She renounced Zeus and the society of the gods of Olympus, and rejected the nectar and ambrosia. She determined henceforth to dwell upon the earth, and keep the society of mortals, conferring blessings where she was kindly received, and severely punishing those who repulsed her. Grief and fasting, and the fatigue attendant upon her wanderings, soon wore her away, until it was impossible for any one to recognise her form. In this condition she came to Eleusis, which at that time was governed by a king named Celeus. Taking upon herself the guise of an old woman, she sat down by a well at the wayside; and there she was found by the king's daughters, who went thither with their pails of brass to draw water. The royal damsels soon began to ply her with questions, upon which she told them that she had been taken by

pirates and had made her escape, and she solicited them to give her succour, and take her into employment as a servant or nurse. The damsels prevailed on their mother Metanira to receive the old woman into the royal house, and employ her as nurse for the young prince Demophon, the only son of Celeus. Demeter was accordingly received into the service of Metanira, but her dignified form was still bowed down by grief. She sat without speaking for a long while, and could not be induced either to smile or taste food, until the maid-servant Iambe, by jests and playfulness, succeeded in raising her spirits. She, however, declined taking any wine, and requested to be supplied with a peculiar posset made of barley-meal mixed with water and mint, with which she at last broke her long and melancholy fast.

The royal infant Demophon, nursed by the divine hands of Demeter, throve exceedingly, and grew up like a young god, to the delight and astonishment of his admiring parents. Demeter gave him no food, but anointed him daily with ambrosia, and plunged him at night into the fire, where he remained unburnt and unharmed. By this extraordinary regimen she would have rendered him immortal, but for an unfortunate accident. Metanira was induced by an indiscreet curiosity to take a secret glance at the proceedings of so successful a nurse; but when she looked in and saw her child in the midst of the flames she shrieked loudly with horror and alarm. The indignant goddess set the infant on the ground, and revealed her true character to Metanira. Her wanness and aged wrinkles immediately disappeared, and she stood confessed in the genuine majesty of her divine shape, diffusing from her divine form a dazzling brightness which illuminated the whole house. "Foolish mother!" she said, "your want of faith has robbed your son of immortal life. I am Demeter! I was preparing for thy son exemption from death and old age; but now he must taste of both.

Ever honoured, however, he shall be, for he has sat upon my knee and slept in my arms. Let the people of Eleusis build me a temple and altar on yonder hill above the fountain. I will prescribe to them the rites which they must religiously perform if they would propitiate my favour."

Metanira was too much terrified by the divine apparition and the suddenness of the intelligence to lift her infant boy from the ground. Her daughters, however, heard her cries and hastened in, and began to embrace and tend their little brother; but the boy filled the air with infantine lamentations, and would not be pacified for the loss of his nurse.

When the strange intelligence reached the ears of king Celeus, he determined upon executing the injunctions of Demeter with the utmost strictness; and at once convoked the people of Eleusis, and erected the temple on the spot which she had pointed out. The building was soon completed, and the goddess then took up her abode in it, still keeping apart from the other Olympian deities, and still pining with grief for the loss of her daughter, and refusing to allow the earth to bring forth its fruits. Thus she continued to withhold her hand for an entire year, a desperate and terrible year. In vain the oxen drew the plough, in vain the barley-seed was cast into the furrow, Demeter would not permit the grain to emerge from the earth. The human race would have been starved, and the Olympian gods would have been deprived of all their honours and sacrifices if the dearth had continued, but at last Zeus found means to conciliate the angry goddess. This was indeed a hard task, for Demeter refused to listen to the entreaties of Iris and of all the other goddesses and gods whom Zeus successively sent to mollify her. She would be satisfied with nothing less than the restoration of her daughter. At last Zeus sent Hermes, the messenger god, down to the under-world to bring Persephone from

Hades. Persephone joyfully accompanied the messenger; but before she departed Pluto prevailed upon her to swallow a grain of pomegranate, which rendered it impossible for her to remain away from him for an entire year.

Demeter, who all this time was residing in her temple at Eleusis, received her daughter from the hands of Hermes with unbounded joy; and the faithful Hecate sympathised in the delight felt both by mother and daughter at this happy reunion. Demeter became once more reconciled with the deities of Olympus, and put forth her relieving hand; and the buried seed sprung up in plentiful harvest, and the earth was covered with fruits and flowers. She found, however, that she could not keep her daughter continually with her, and was obliged to permit Persephone to return to Pluto every spring, at the time when the seed was sown, and spend the third of every year with the king of terrors in the gloomy underworld. Demeter herself returned to Olympus, and dwelt once more with the Olympian deities; but before she left Eleusis she communicated to Celeus and his daughters, and also to Triptolemus, Diocles, and Eumolpus, the divine service and the solemnities which she required to be observed in her honour. Thus were instituted the holy and venerable mysteries of Eleusis, by the express and personal direction of the goddess Demeter; the lesser mysteries, celebrated in February at seed-time, in honour of Persephone; the greater mysteries, celebrated in August at the time of harvest, in honour of Demeter herself. Both goddesses were jointly patronesses of the sacred city Eleusis and the magnificent and ancient temple.

Such was the temple legend of Demeter and Persephone, or The Mother and Daughter, as they were frequently called, connected with the Eleusinian mysteries. It was fully and generally believed in by the Greeks, in

the time of Herodotus, as a faithful record of the past; and the pious Eleusinian could point out to the curious worshipper the very well overshadowed by an olive tree near which Demeter had rested; whilst the posset of barley-meal and mint and the cheerful jokes of Iambe were duly alluded to in the sacred ritual of her worship. The modern reader, however, must regard all these incidents as myths belonging to a later period than the first introduction of the mysteries, and as being intended probably to account for each circumstance in the solemnities. The meaning of the legend, however, is obvious. Persephone, who was carried off to the lower world, was the seed-corn which remains concealed in the ground for a considerable part of the year. Persephone, who returned to her mother, was the corn which springs from the ground and nourishes men and animals. The lesser and greater mysteries were probably, therefore, originally solemnities in honour of seedtime and harvest; but after a considerable amplification of the ceremonies, the temple legend may have been produced and gradually amplified. Whether it was founded upon any actual fact cannot be known; but one thing is certain, that as it harmonised with the prevailing faith and feeling, it was soon regarded as a true history of the past, and as the real origin of the Eleusinian ritual.

We must now turn to the mysteries themselves. Herodotus had already been initiated into the preparatory rites of the lesser Eleusinia, and enrolled amongst the mystæ. The high priest of the family of the Eumolpids, arrayed in the sacerdotal diadem and long purple robe, and with his hair cut in a peculiar fashion, had administered to him the solemn oath and the rites of purification, and given him such introductory teachings as would enable him to understand those great mysteries which were now to be revealed.

The solemnities of the great Eleusinia lasted for nine

days. The first day was set apart for the assembling of all the mystæ in the city of Athens. On the second day the mystæ went in solemn procession to the seacoast, where they underwent another purification. The third was a day of fasting, after which the mystæ tasted the peculiar posset of barley-meal and mint with which the goddess Demeter had broken her own fast at Eleusis, and they also partook of a frugal meal, consisting of cakes made of sesame and honey. On the fourth day sacrifices were performed, and there was a procession consisting of a basket of pomegranate and poppy-seeds placed on a waggon and drawn by oxen, and followed by a crowd of women with small mystic cases in their hands. The fifth day was called the torch day, and was distinguished by a mysterious night procession with torches along the Sacred Way which led from Athens to Eleusis. This torchlight procession, as a symbolical representation of Demeter's search for Persephone, was peculiarly striking and significant. The priests led the way in their sacerdotal robes, singing melancholy hymns for the lost Persephone, from which, indeed, they had first obtained their name of Eumolpids, or "beautiful singers." Next followed the mystæ, clad in purple garments, and bearing crowns of myrtle on their heads; and the whole procession moving sadly along beneath the fitful light of torches, solemnly and earnestly lamenting for the lost daughter of Demeter.

The sixth day, called Iacchus, was the most solemn of all. Persephone had been brought back from the underworld, and the harvest and the vine were gladdening the earth. The statue of Iacchus, the Eleusinian Dionysus and son of Demeter, crowned with a chaplet of myrtle, and carrying a torch in his hand, was carried along the Sacred Way, amidst joyous shouts and songs, from Athens to Eleusis. Thousands of worshippers, clad in festal attire, and crowned with garlands of flowers and wreaths of ivy, followed in the pageant, chanting the praises of

Iacchus in strains of harmonious adoration; and the crowd of spectators and followers not unfrequently reached the enormous number of 30,000 persons. The Sacred Way issued from the western and principal gate of Athens into the most beautiful of her suburbs. Leaving the Cerameicus, with its monuments to the mighty dead, the road passed through the olive groves, celebrated in after times as the resort of Plato and the Academy, and crossed the stream of the Cephissus, and then mounted the hill of Ægaleos. Thence it descended into the Sacred Plain, and coasting the Bay of Eleusis, at last reached the temple hill, crowned with the stupendous pile of the temple of Demeter. Such was the road over hill and plain traversed by the joyous thousands on the great day of the festival.

But this important day, which was ushered in with joy and thanksgiving by the main body of the worshippers, was regarded with a certain nameless awe by the pious and trembling mystæ, for the coming night brought with it the consummation of the mystic ceremonies, and the unfolding of those mighty secrets connected with the burial of the dead and immortality of the soul, which were illustrated by the disappearance and return of Persephone. At eventide Herodotus and his fellow mystæ were clad in the sacred fawn-skin, and led into the vestibule of the great temple. The portals were still closed; but the priests commanded with a loud voice that none but the initiated and the mystæ should remain in the sacred precinct. The worshippers now remained alone. Presently strange sounds were heard; apparitions were seen of dying men; lightnings flashed through the darkness, and thunders rolled around; light and gloom succeeded each other with rapid interchange. Then the folding doors of the inner sanctuary were thrown open, and the interior of the adytum shone with a blaze of light. The entranced votaries were led to the feet of the gorgeously attired statue

of Demeter. Their brows were wreathed with myrtle, to direct their thoughts to the myrtle groves of the blessed. Their eyes were dazzled by beautiful colours, and their ears were charmed by melodious music. They beheld visions of the creation; they saw the workings of that divine agency which regulated and controlled the universe; they contemplated those beneficent influences by which the great goddess Demeter had elevated mankind from the state of a savage to a state of civilisation. Above all they learnt the wondrous mystery of immortality typified by the decaying of the seed and its glorious reproduction, the departure of Persephone to the under-world of shades and her glorious restoration to the realms of light.

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Such is all we can learn concerning the Eleusinian mysteries, and much of this is conjectural. On the seventh day Herodotus and the others who had been thus solemnly initiated returned to Athens in company; and it will not be difficult for the reader to sympathise with their feelings. When, however, they approached the bridge which led over the river Cephissus, they found an immense crowd of laughers gathered round the figure of a woman, who was elevated above the mob. This woman, strange as it may seem, appertained to the worship of Demeter, for she was intended to represent the maid-servant Iambe, who, according to the legend already narrated, succeeded in dispelling the gloom of the goddess and tempting her to indulge in a smile. It was, however, soon evident that the woman was a man in disguise; and the extraordinary manner in which he poured forth his wit and raillery upon the passers by soon attracted first the attention, and then the mirth, of the newly initiated. Whoever the travellers might be who were returning to Athens,—citizens of the highest eminence and of noble blood, archons, generals, admirals, and Areopagites,—all were alike treated with a taunting ridicule and a mocking

wit worthy of the best and bitterest efforts of the comic muse. Herodotus and his companions soon mingled in the crowd, and, for the time, lost the impressions produced by the bright but mysterious insight into the spiritual and eternal future which the mysteries had taught them. May the Christian reader, who has obtained through the teachings of a Divine Revelation a more sure and certain hope of a joyful immortality, never permit a similar levity to intrude upon his better and purer worship, or sully the brightness of those spiritual longings for immortal life which the Gospel alone can inspire!

CHAP. XXXI.

GREEK RELIGION. ATHENS, B.C. 458.

CHANGES IN THE RELIGIOUS IDEAS AND BELIEF OF THE ANCIENT GREEKS BETWEEN THE TIMES OF HESIOD AND HERODOTUS, B.C. 750—458. — REVIEW OF THE ORTHODOX FAITH AS LAID DOWN BY HESIOD. — IDEAS OF HESIOD CONCERNING THE ORIGIN OF THE HUMAN RACE. — THE GOLDEN RACE. — THE SILVER RACE. — THE BRAZEN RACE. — THE HEROIC RACE. — THE IRON RACE. — THE IDEAS OF HESIOD CONCERNING A FUTURE STATE. — MODIFICATIONS OF THE HESIODIC IDEAS IN THE TIME OF HERODOTUS. — CHANGES PRODUCED BY THE MYSTERIES OF ELEUSIS. — CHANGES PRODUCED BY THE ORGIES OF DIONYSUS AND CYBELE. — THE TEACHINGS OF PYTHAGORAS. — THE ORPHIC SOCIETIES. — LEGENDARY ACCOUNT OF ORPHEUS. — WORSHIP OF DIONYSUS-ZAGREUS. — HIGHER AND MORE HOPEFUL VIEWS OF DEATH. — AGE OF ORPHIC LITERATURE. — ORPHIC THEOGONY. — DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE HESIODIC AND THE ORPHIC IDEAS. — LEGEND OF DIONYSUS-ZAGREUS. — GENERAL REFORMATION THROUGHOUT THE ANCIENT HEATHEN WORLD IN THE SIXTH CENTURY B.C.

In a former chapter on the childhood and early education of Herodotus we endeavoured to present the reader with a brief sketch of the mythology of ancient Greece, as it was set forth by Hesiod, and received and understood by the great body of the Greek people. We have, however, already shown in a variety of ways, especially whilst developing the theological views brought forward in the Oresteia of Æschylus and in the mysterious worship of Dionysus and Demeter, that in the century or two before the time of Herodotus, many poets, philosophers, and sages had endeavoured to interpret the Greek mythology according to the purer ideas of a more enlightened and thoughtful age. The feeling that purifying and expiatory ceremonies were necessary for the washing away of the stain of bloodguiltiness, the doctrine of the immor-

tality of the soul, and the extraordinary prominence given to the worship of Dionysus and Demeter over the worship of Zeus, or of any other Olympian deity, are one and all sufficient to prove that the simple and childlike belief of a former generation had been considerably modified and expanded by the introduction of mysterious and spiritual ideas, which never entered the minds of the Greeks in the Homeric times.

According to the orthodox faith, which we have already described in detail, the universe was originally a Chaos, from whence sprang first the Earth, with Tartarus at her base, and then Eros immediately afterwards. Subsequently Chaos gave birth to Night and Erebus, and they in their turn gave birth to Day and Æther; whilst Earth produced Heaven or Uranos, and subsequently married him and gave birth to the first dynasty of gods, whom we may call the Uranids, and who consisted of the Titans, the Cyclopes, and the Hundred-handed Giants. Uranos imprisoned the Titans in the earth, and threw the Cyclopes and Hundred-handed Giants into Tartarus, but was at length overthrown and disabled by his son Cronos the Titan, who thereupon released his brother Titans and established the second dynasty of gods called the Cronids. Cronos, however, like his father Uranos, endeavoured to destroy his progeny, but was at last attacked by his son Zeus, who had been saved by a stratagem. Zeus having released his uncles the Cyclopes and Hundred-handed Giants from the depths of Tartarus, commenced a war against his father Cronos and the Titans, which terminated in the perpetual imprisonment of Cronos in Tartarus, under the guardianship of the Hundred-handed Giants, and the establishment of the third and reigning dynasty of the Olympic deities. Of these, Zeus became ruler of Olympus and lord of all; but Poseidon obtained the sovereignty of the sea, and Pluto that of Hades, or the under-world. The names and attributes of the other gods and goddesses

need not be mentioned here, as they are not necessary to our present explanation.

Zeus with his brethren and colleagues were thus the great national deities of the ancient Greeks. Apollo was his prophet, who made known the will of Zeus to mankind by means of his oracles; whilst Demeter was merely the goddess of the cornfield, and Dionysus the god of the vineyard. The deities of Olympus were supposed to have houses and wives like men, and were, indeed, believed to be actuated by all the human passions and affections, though invested with a divine share of power and an exemption from death, and also, with some rare exceptions, with an exemption from human sufferings and infirmities.

With respect to the origin of the human race we have already seen that the Greeks in general traced the descent of the living generation to some primitive ancestral hero, who had himself sprung from the soil, or from a neighbouring river or mountain, or from a god or nymph, or some other divine being. But the same poet, Hesiod, who had framed the Greek theogony, endeavoured in his account of the early races of mankind to reconcile the popular notion of the old heroic times with his own idea that the race of heroes was insufficient to connect the mighty gods of Olympus with the degenerate men of his own generation. Accordingly he describes five distinct and successive races of mankind.

First came the Golden race, who were made by the Olympic gods, and who were good, perfect, and happy. They lived in ease and tranquillity upon the spontaneous abundance of the earth, suffering neither disease nor old age. Death visited them like a gentle sleep, after which they became guardian dæmons upon earth, moving invisibly among mortal men, and invested with the privilege of dispensing riches and taking account of good and evil deeds.

Secondly, the gods made the Silver race, who were greatly inferior to the Golden, both in mind and body. They acted recklessly and mischievously towards each other, and disdained to worship the immortal gods, or offer them sacrifice. Accordingly Zeus buried them in the earth, where they still received inferior honours as the Blest of the under-world.

Thirdly, Zeus made the Brazen race, a warlike and terrible people, so called because their arms, houses, and implements were all of brass, iron not being in existence. They were endowed with immense strength and adamantine soul. They neither cultivated bread, nor touched it. They constantly fought with one another, until at last they perished by each other's hands, and descended without name or privilege to Hades.

Fourthly, Zeus made the Heroic race, who were far better and more just than the race of Brass. They were the heroes or demigods who fought at Troy and Thebes; but even this improved stock at last became extinct. Some perished in war, others were removed by Zeus to a happier state in the Islands of the Blessed, where they dwelt in peace and comfort under the government of Cronos.

Fifthly, came the Iron race, to which Hesiod himself belonged. The poet describes his contemporaries as mischievous, dishonest, unjust, ungrateful, given to perjury, careless of the ties of family relationship, and utterly regardless of the will of the gods. They were doomed to guilt and suffering; and the time would come when Zeus would put an end to the race. Hesiod, however, did not venture to predict what sort of race would succeed.

We have brought forward these views of Hesiod concerning the origin of the gods and origin of the human race prominently and distinctly, because, notwithstanding many modifications and additions taught by different philosophers and exclusive brotherhoods, or by the priests of

81555

the different mysteries, they formed the great staple of the popular religious belief for some centuries before and after the time of Herodotus. With the mythic narratives of gods and heroes we have nothing to do in the present chapter. They must be judged according to historical, and not theological criticism.

Hesiod probably flourished about B.C. 750, or about one century after Homer and three centuries before Herodotus. He had greatly enlarged and systematised, and, at the same time, corrupted, the skeleton theogony which we find briefly indicated in Homer; especially by introducing the account of Uranos and the dynasty of the Uranids, and the mention and description of the wars between Zeus and the Cyclopes and Cronos and the Titans, all of which were totally unknown to the author or authors of the Iliad and Odyssey. The ideas of Hesiod respecting the state of the soul after death were decidedly in advance of those of Homer. According to the description in the Odyssey, all the dead, including the most renowned heroes, led a shadowy existence in Hades, where, like phantoms, they continued the same pursuits which they had followed on earth, though without will or understanding. A few favourites of Zeus only, such as Menelaus, whose wife Helen was the daughter of Zeus and Leda, were permitted to reach the Elysian Fields on the border of the Ocean. Hesiod, on the other hand, describes all the heroes as being collected by Zeus in the Islands of the Blessed, and in one verse (which, however, is rejected by some critics) he says that these islands were under the dominion of Cronos.

The great changes wrought in the religious worship of the Greeks between the time of Hesiod and that of Herodotus seem to have been brought about by importations from Asia Minor, Thrace, and Egypt, and may be separated into four principal and distinct influences,—namely, first, the several religious mysteries, especially those of

Eleusis; secondly, the introduction of wild and enthusiastic rites known by the name of orgies, which were principally celebrated in connexion with the worship of Dionysus and Demeter; thirdly, the teachings of the Pythagorean brotherhood in connexion with the worship of Apollo; and, fourthly, the teachings of the Orphic society in connexion with the worship of Dionysus Zagreus. Shortly before the birth of Herodotus, the two societies of Pythagoreans and Orphics appear to have become amalgamated. A brief consideration of the character of these four influences — the mysteries, the orgies, the dogmas of Pythagoras, and the teachings of the Orphic society — is absolutely necessary before the modern student can obtain any true insight into the religious faith and hope of the more thoughtful and educated Greeks of the age of Herodotus.

First, as regards the Greek mysteries, we may remark that they were connected solely with the worship of those deities whose influence was supposed to be exercised in the dark region at the centre of the earth, and who were thus thought to have but little connexion with human life, and only to exercise their gloomy powers in the world beyond the grave. These deities were a distinct class from the gods of Olympus, and were comprehended under the name of the "Chthonian gods." Thus Persephone, in her character of wife of Pluto and queen of Hades, was a Chthonian goddess. Her husband was likewise a Chthonian god, and was worshipped under the name of Zeus Chthonios. Zeus Laphystios, a grasping and devouring power, the god of vengeance and death*, likewise belonged to the same order of deities. The souls of departed heroes in Hades were regarded as Chthonian dæmons; and the terrible Eumenides, or Erinnyes, called the Furies, or Avenging Deities, — originally only per-

* See Vol. I. p. 366.

sonifications of the Curses pronounced against a criminal, and perhaps to be identified with Remorse,—were regarded as the acting resentment of a departed soul, and therefore as Chthonian divinities. The Demeter of the Eleusinian mysteries was likewise worshipped as a Chthonian deity. The legend, it is true, speaks of her return to Olympus, but her name denotes the Earth, as mother and author of life; and she had nothing in common with those gods whom the epic muse assembled round the throne of the Olympic Zeus.

The Eleusinian and other established mysteries certainly exercised some influence upon the literature and religious feeling of the nation at large, though the hymns and prayers belonging to their rituals were not imparted to the general public, but only to the initiated. Pindar, who speaks of the mysteries of Eleusis, says, "Happy is he who beheld them, and descends into the hollow earth; he knows the end, he knows the divine origin of life." Pindar was still living, though a very old man, at the time when Herodotus was initiated; and his observations on the state of the soul after death will show the striking advance of the Greek conceptions in this particular since the time of Homer. In his sublime Ode of Consolation to Theron, he says that all misdeeds of this world are severely judged in the infernal regions, but that a happy life, in eternal sunshine, without care for subsistence, is the portion of the good; "while those who, through a threefold existence in the upper and lower worlds, have kept their souls pure from all sin, ascend the path of Zeus to the citadel of Cronos, where the Islands of the Blessed are refreshed by the breezes of Ocean, and golden flowers glitter." In his "Threnes," or "Laments for the Dead," he developed yet more distinctly his ideas about immortality, and spoke of the tranquil life of the blessed in perpetual sunshine, among fragrant groves, and at festal games and sacrifices, and of the torments of the wretched

in eternal night. In the same compositions he likewise explained himself more fully as to the existence alternating between the upper and lower world, by which lofty spirits rise to a still higher state. He says, "Those from whom Persephone receives an atonement for their former guilt, their souls she sends, in the ninth year, to the sun of heaven. From them spring great kings and men mighty in power and renowned for wisdom, whom posterity calls sacred heroes among men." The first part of this passage may be readily understood, if we bear in mind that, according to the ancient law, a person who had committed homicide must have expiated his offence by an exile, or even servitude, of eight years, before his guilt could be removed.

The orgies, or wild and enthusiastic rites, connected with the worship of Dionysus and Demeter were decidedly importations from foreign countries. They were distinguished by violent ecstasies, manifestations of temporary frenzy, and the furious clashing of noisy instruments, such as cymbals and tambourines, which were all perfectly foreign to the national religion and character of the people of Hellas. Some cities seem to have been preserved from these distracting and fanatical influences. At Athens, as we have seen, the state festival of the Dionysia was chiefly celebrated with dramatic entertainments, and still preserved a great portion of its primitive joviality. The worship of Demeter, as the Earth and the Great Mother, was likewise veiled in the solemn mysteries of the holy and venerable Eleusinia. In other cities, however, the joyousness with which these deities had been originally worshipped was no longer to be seen; but the worshippers yielded themselves up to a sacred madness and divine fury, which was sufficient to disgust the more rational and sober-minded Greek, even though he might believe that the gods were really the authors of such frantic enthusiasm. The women especially were most unmanageable. Clothed

with fawn-skins, and bearing the sanctified thyrsus, they flocked to the mountains in crowds during the festival season, and passed the night there with torches, dancing with mad excitement, clamorously invoking Dionysus, devouring raw flesh, and even cutting themselves without feeling the wounds. Some of the rites connected with the worship of Demeter became equally violent and ecstatic. In the mountains and forests of Phrygia the goddess Cybele was worshipped with wild excitement; and the Greeks in Asia Minor, amongst whom Herodotus had been brought up, identified this Asiatic goddess with Rhea, the Earth and mother of Demeter, or with Demeter herself, in her character of Mother Earth. Cybele was called the "Great Mother," the "Mother of the Gods," and by a variety of other names, all more or less connecting her with Rhea or Demeter. Her enthusiastic priests, known as the Corybantes, performed in her honour orgiastic dances in full armour to the sound of flutes, drums, cymbals, horns, and other noisy instruments; and these rites soon spread throughout Hellas. We have already noticed the catching effect of these tumultuous orgies on the minds of a travelling Scythian; and it is not difficult to understand how the Asiatic Greeks, many of whom had married women of the country, willingly joined in this wild orgiastic worship, which thus soon inoculated their brethren in European Hellas with the same religious fever.

Concerning the influence of the teachings of Pythagoras we shall say very little, and indeed but very little is known of his doctrines. He was born at Samos, about a hundred years before the birth of Herodotus, and after spending several years in travelling, especially in Egypt, at last settled in the city of Crotona, in southern Italy, the ancient enemy of Sybaris. He is to be regarded chiefly as a religious teacher and schoolmaster, but he was also to some extent a politician. He formed a kind of brother-

hood or society, the members of which were bound together by religious rites and observances peculiar to themselves, and went through a laborious mental and bodily training. One of his most prominent doctrines was that of the metempsychosis, or transmigration of the souls of deceased men into other men, as well as into animals. He appears to have been regarded by his followers as a prophet inspired by Apollo; and some, indeed, said that he was a son of that deity. His residence in Egypt seems to have given him that turn for mystic observance, asceticism, and peculiarity of diet and clothing which manifested itself amongst the members of his league or society. He thus appeared as the revealer of a mode of life—a severe training of the body, an austere self-control, and a strict ritual obedience—which was calculated to raise his disciples above the level of mankind, and to recommend them to the favour of the gods. This Pythagorean life could only be approached by probation and initiatory ceremonies. His influence seems to have rapidly spread over the cities of southern Italy and Sicily; but the aristocratic and exclusive character of his clubs aroused the jealousy and hostility of the democracy, and the Pythagorean order was everywhere suppressed. Pythagoras was a very old man when these revolutions took place, and he either perished at the time or died shortly afterwards. Many of his followers who survived the subversion of their order, having contracted a fondness for exclusive associations, seem to have taken refuge in the Orphic societies, which we are now about to describe.

The Orphic societies were associations of persons who called themselves the followers of Orpheus, an ancient mystical poet who lived in Thrace in the time of the Argonauts, and was said to have accompanied the expedition in search of the golden fleece. He was thus said to have lived before the time of Homer, but his name is not mentioned either in the Homeric or Hesiodic poems,

though it had attained great celebrity in the lyric period, that is, in the sixth and seventh centuries before the Christian era. He was said to have been presented with the lyre by Apollo himself, and to have been instructed by the divine Muses in the use of the instrument. His music enchanted not only the wild beasts, but the trees and rocks, so that they moved from their places to follow the sound of his golden lyre. The possession of this mighty power induced the Argonauts to seek his aid, and he materially contributed to the success of their expedition. At the sound of his lyre the ship Argo glided into the sea; the Argonauts tore themselves away from the pleasures of Lemnos; the moving rocks, which threatened to crush their ships, were fixed in their places; and the Colchian dragon, which guarded the golden fleece, was lulled to sleep. After his return from the expedition he took up his abode in a cave in Thrace, and employed himself in the civilisation of its wild inhabitants. He is also said to have visited Egypt. He married a nymph named Eurydice; and when she died he followed her into Hades, where the charms of his lyre suspended the torments of the damned and won back his wife from the most inexorable of all deities. Pluto, however, only permitted Eurydice to follow her husband to the surface of the earth upon one condition, namely, that Orpheus should not look back upon her until they had arrived in the upper world. The anxiety of love overcame the prudence of the poet. Just as she was about to pass the fatal bounds he looked round to see if Eurydice was following him, and beheld her caught back into the infernal regions. His grief for her loss led him to treat the Thracian women with contempt, and in revenge they tore him to pieces at their Dionysiac orgies. The divine Muses then collected the fragments of his body, and buried them at the foot of Mount Olympus, where the nightingale sang sweetly over his grave.

The Orphic society declared themselves to be under the guidance of this mythical poet. They dedicated themselves to the worship of Dionysus,—not the madness-inspiring god whose orgies we have recently described, but the Chthonian deity, Dionysus-Zagreus, who was the personified expression not only of rapturous pleasure, but also of a deep sorrow for the miseries of human life. Dionysus Zagreus was combined as an infernal deity with the gloomy Pluto, and upon him the Orphics founded their hopes of the purification and ultimate immortality of the soul. We need scarcely say that these Orphic worshippers indulged in no unrestrained pleasure and frantic enthusiasm, but rather aimed at an ascetic purity of life and manners, and wore white linen garments, like Egyptian and Oriental priests. Their doctrines and mysteries, however, bore no analogy to the philosophy of Pythagoras. Among the Orphics the worship of Dionysus-Zagreus was the centre of all religious ideas; the Pythagoreans, on the other hand, preferred the worship of Apollo and the Muses, which, indeed, was best suited to the spirit of their social and political institutions. It was not until after the dissolution of the Pythagorean league in Southern Italy, and the sanguinary persecution of its members by the democratic party, that anything like a junction was formed between the two sects.

It is almost impossible to determine the exact time when the Orphic association was first formed in Greece. Views of death, higher and more hopeful than those presented by Homer, prevailed, as we have seen, at a comparatively early period. The idea that the Islands of the Blessed were under the dominion of Cronos marks a great change in the religious feeling. The thoughtful believer could not conceive divine beings, like the gods of Olympus and the Titans, in a state of eternal dissension — the Olympic deities enjoying undisturbed felicity and the unhappy Titans abandoned to all the horrors of Tartarus. Hence

the belief that Zeus had released the Titans from their chains, and that Cronos, reconciled with his son Zeus, continued to reign in the Islands of the Blessed over the good mortals of a former generation. In the seventh century B.C. several persons appeared, chiefly, however, under the influence of the ideas and rites of the worship of Apollo, who, partly by the purity of their lives, and partly by a fanatical turn of mind, surrounded themselves with a sort of supernatural halo, and obtained immense influence in the religious world. Amongst these was Epimenides of Crete, the same who was sent for to Athens in his character of expiatory priest, to free the city from the curse which had rested upon it in consequence of the Cylonian massacre. Another and more extraordinary individual, named Abaris, appeared in Greece about a century later, in the character of an expiatory priest, with rites of purification and holy songs. He gave himself out to be an Hyperborean, that is, one of the nation beyond the north wind, which was most loved by Apollo, and in which the god manifested himself in person. As a proof of his origin he carried with him an arrow, which he said Apollo had given him in the country of the Hyperboreans. Again, there was Aristeas, who took the opposite direction, and, inspired by Apollo, travelled to the far north in search of the Hyperboreans. He described this marvellous journey in a poem called "Arimaspea," which was read by Herodotus. It consisted of ethnographical accounts and stories about the northern nations, mixed up with notions belonging to the worship of Apollo. Aristeas became quite a marvellous personage. He was said to have accompanied Apollo at the founding of Metapontum in Southern Italy, in the form of a raven, and to have reappeared in the same city some centuries afterwards,—viz., at the time when he really lived, which was about the period of Pythagoras. It is certain, however, that an extensive Orphic literature was in existence about the time of the Persian

war; but we can learn little or nothing of the Orphic poets. The one of whom we know the most is Onomacritus. He lived in the time of Pisistratus, and collected the oracles of Musæus for the Pisistratids, but was detected by the poet Lasus in the very act of interpolating amongst them a prophecy of his own, that the island of Lemnos would disappear beneath the sea. In consequence of this forgery, the Pisistratids banished him from Athens.

In treating of the Orphic doctrines it must be remarked that there is some difficulty in distinguishing the early Orphic poetry from the Orphic productions of a much later period, when Paganism was on the decline. A glance, however, at the Orphic theogony, as compared with the Hesiodic, will be sufficient to convey an idea of the spirit and character of the Orphic compositions. Instead of commencing with the Chaos of Hesiod, the Orphic theogony attempted to arrive at higher abstractions. It placed Cronos, or Time as a person, at the head of all things, conferring upon him life and creative power. Cronos was described as spontaneously producing chaos and æther, and as forming from chaos, within the æther, a vast mundane egg of a brilliant white colour. This mundane egg is an Oriental idea. It was supposed to include the matter of chaos, and to contain the whole essence of the world, which accordingly grew within it like the life of a bird. It was impregnated by the winds, or rather by the æther in motion which surrounded it; and thence proceeded the golden-winged Eros, or "Love," who was also called Metis, "the mind of the world;" and at a much later period Phanes, or "the light of the universe and first principle of all things." This Eros-Phanes was conceived by the Orphic poets as a pantheistic being. The heaven was his head, the earth his foot, the sun and moon his eyes, the rising and setting of the heavenly bodies his horns. An Orphic poet addressed Phanes in the following poetical language:—"Thy tears

are the hapless race of men; by thy laugh thou hast raised up the sacred race of the gods." Eros gave birth to a long series of gods similar to that in Hesiod. By his daughter Night he produced Heaven and Earth, and then brought forth the Titans Cronos and Rhea, the parents of Zeus. The Orphic poets then followed Hesiod in making Zeus the supreme god at this period of the world. He was therefore supposed to have supplanted Eros-Phanes, and to have swallowed him and absorbed him into himself, with all the pre-existing elements of things. Zeus thus generated all things anew out of his own being and conformably to his own divine ideas. He was thus identified with the *anima mundi*. He was represented as being the first and last; the beginning, middle, and end; man and woman; and, in fine, everything.

The great difference, however, between the notions of the Orphic poets and those of the early Greeks lay in the fact that the Orphics did not limit their views to the present state of mankind; and still less did they acquiesce in Hesiod's melancholy doctrine of successive ages, each one still worse than the preceding. They looked for a cessation of strife, a holy peace, a state of the highest happiness and beatitude of souls at the end of all things. Their firm hopes of this result were founded upon Dionysus-Zagreus, from the worship of whom all their peculiar religious ideas were derived. According to them, Zagreus, "the horned child," was the son of Zeus by his own daughter Persephone. The young god was supposed to have to pass through great perils. This was always an essential part of the mythology of Dionysus; but it was converted by the Orphic poets into the marvellous legend which was preserved by later writers. According to this legend, Dionysus-Zagreus was the favourite of his father, a child of magnificent promise, and predestined, if he grew up, to succeed to supreme dominion, as well as to the handling of the thunderbolts. Whilst yet an infant he

was seated on the throne of Olympus by the side of Zeus and Apollo, and the Curetes were directed to protect him. The jealous Hera, however, determined to intercept his career. By her instigations the Titans disguised themselves under a coating of plaster, and approached the throne and began to tempt the childish fancy of the young god with various playthings. At last, whilst Zagreus was contemplating the reflection of his face in a splendid mirror, the Titans suddenly approached him and tore him to pieces. The heart, however, was preserved by the goddess Athena, and given to Zeus, who, thereupon, swallowed it in a drink; and as the ancients considered the heart as the seat of life, so Dionysus was supposed to be again contained in Zeus, and again begotten by him. Thus, Dionysus, torn in pieces and born again, was destined to succeed Zeus in the government of the world, and to restore the golden age. In the same system Dionysus was also the god from whom the liberation of souls was expected; for, according to an Orphic notion, human souls were punished by being confined in the body as in a prison. The sufferings of the soul in its prison, the steps and transitions by which it passed to a higher state of existence, and its gradual purification and enlightenment, were all fully described in the Orphic poems; and Dionysus and Persephone were represented as the deities who performed the task of guiding and purifying the souls of men.

It is impossible to say whether the whole of the foregoing Orphic doctrines were taught as early as the fifth century B. C., when Herodotus flourished. It is, however, certain that more serious and spiritual views of human nature than could possibly have been elicited from the study of Homer and Hesiod, were taking deep root in many individual minds among the Greek nation, at least a century earlier than our traveller's birth, and were pro-

mulgated amongst exclusive brotherhoods at the time when he visited Athens. The modern reader may be somewhat startled at seeing glimmerings of Divine Truth mingled with these mythological teachings of pagan philosophers; but next to the age which saw the advent of a Saviour, the sixth century before the Christian era may be regarded as one of the most memorable in the religious history of the ancient world. The sublime exhortations and solemn warnings of the Hebrew prophets, and, above all, their glorious visions of a coming Messiah — visions fresh from the throne of the Almighty Father — had glanced off from the steel breasts of the hardened Jews, but thrilled throughout the hearts of distant Gentiles. The mission of Jonah to that mighty Nineveh which has recently been exhumed, the connection of the kings of Samaria with those of Damascus, the dispersion of the Ten Tribes over the territories of Media and Assyria, the Babylonian captivity of Judah, the conversion of Nebuchadnezzar, and the mighty influence exercised by Daniel in the Courts of Babylon and Susa, had all doubtlessly contributed to that wondrous religious movement which about the sixth century before Christ was general throughout the civilised world. A great reformation was introduced into Persia and Chaldæa by Zoroaster, into China by Confucius, into India by that personage who assumed, or to whom was attributed, the last Avatar, under the name of Buddha. In Egypt it was forced upon the natives by the Persian conquerors; and the general destruction of their images and temples, and the restrictions which were laid upon the ancient worship of the conquered, almost abolished the priesthood, and obliterated the old religion. We may, therefore, surely infer that this same reformation, which had echoed on from the hills and vales of Palestine throughout the eastern world, was likewise carried by the Pythagorean and Orphic philosophers into

Italy and Greece, where the newly acquired truths became blended with the old pagan philosophy, and cast a few glimmerings of Divine light upon that spiritual chaos, from whence darkness and idolatry could never be dispelled until the Sun of Righteousness should himself arise with healing in his wings.

CHAP. XXXII.

ATHENS AND CYRENE, B.C. 458—457.

HERODOTUS'S MELANCHOLY.—PREPARATIONS FOR A VOYAGE TO EGYPT.—A STARTLING DISCOVERY CONNECTED WITH HERODOTUS'S LOVE AFFAIR.—EMBARKATION.—VOYAGE TO CRETE.—A STORM.—A DIFFICULTY CONNECTED WITH THE WINE SKINS.—HERODOTUS'S APPEARANCE IN THE CHARACTER OF A CHTHONIAN DEITY.—FAIR WEATHER.—ARRIVAL AT CYRENE.—NATURAL BEAUTIES OF THE COUNTRY.—MYTHIC TRADITIONS CONNECTED WITH THE COLONISATION OF CYRENE.—MINYANS DESCENDED FROM THE ARGONAUT SAILORS AND LEMNIAN LADIES.—ATROCITIES AT LEMNOS.—MINYANS SETTLED AT SPARTA.—COLONISATION OF THERA.—THERÆAN TRADITION OF THE COLONISATION OF CYRENE.—CYRENÆAN TRADITION.

HERODOTUS spent the winter of B.C. 458—457 at Athens, partly in the house of Euphorion, and partly in the houses of other citizens, who were acquainted with the wealth and influence of Lyxes, and wished to show every hospitality to his son. The studies which engaged his attention during this period, and which we have indicated in the preceding chapter, had combined to render him both serious and melancholy; whilst the fact of his being in love with a mysterious and unknown beauty, a beauty whom he could never hope to approach, seemed for the time to have deprived him of his natural liveliness, and made him restless without rendering him cheerful. Euphorion, Captain Phylarchus, and indeed every one in Athens with whom Herodotus was acquainted, saw and lamented this marked change in our traveller's character; but it was generally ascribed to the fact of his having been absent for so many years from his father's house, and to the reiterated commands of Lyxes that he should not yet return to Halicarnassus. At last a fresh voyage

was proposed. The Athenian fleet, which had left Cyprus to assist the Egyptian revolt against the Persian supremacy, had gained such decided advantages over the enemy, that every one in Athens believed that Egypt would be successful in asserting her independence, and become a most important and invaluable ally. During the war the trade with Egypt had been in a most languishing state, but tidings of fresh victories over the Persians determined Phylarchus upon freighting his vessel with a cargo of wine, and making a voyage of speculation to Naucratis. Wine would always command a ready sale amongst the mysterious but convivial topers who peopled the Delta; whilst, as it was war-time, he thought he might be able to get a cargo of fine linen at a cheap rate. He therefore announced to Herodotus his intention of taking a trip to Egypt, directly the spring should be sufficiently advanced to authorise his making a bold run across the Mediterranean; and we need scarcely say that Herodotus, after some vain regrets upon his unsuccessful search for the fair Athenian, accepted his friend's offer of a berth, and prepared for the voyage.

The winter passed away, and the spring likewise, but still Phylarchus remained in the Piræus, for in truth a voyage to Egypt was no easy matter. The safest, but at the same time the longest route, was to run across the Ægean to Cos or Rhodes; and then to coast along the southern shore of Asia Minor and the western shore of Syria and Palestine, and thus reach Egypt without losing sight of land. Phylarchus, however, had determined on taking the shorter, bolder, but more perilous route by way of Crete; which in those early days of navigation could only be undertaken when the light Etesian winds of summer were blowing across the Mediterranean, and when a skipper could calculate upon a succession of sufficiently clear nights to enable him to read the stars without interruption.

One evening when the summer had fairly commenced, and the day of embarkation was almost finally settled, Herodotus, who had returned to the house of Euphorion, retired to rest rather earlier than usual; not, however, to sleep, but to muse in solitude. After some time he heard the front door of the house open, and Euphorion enter the little interior courtyard, followed by our straightforward sailor friend, Captain Phylarchus. He next heard inquiries made for himself, and a response from a slave that he had retired to his bedchamber. Wine was next ordered, and the Athenian and his guest sat out in the open court, to enjoy their wine and the pleasant summer evening, in a position where our hero could hear every word that passed.

Herodotus would himself have joined their company, but did not feel in sufficient spirits to do so; and therefore contented himself with lazily listening to their conversation. Phylarchus had come to say that he should set sail in five days, and as Euphorion had been a traveller, much discussion ensued concerning distant ports. Then Herodotus found that he himself was becoming the subject of conversation, and he was compelled to endure all that intense irritation and annoyance which the best man in the world must always undergo if condemned to listen to remarks made upon himself by persons who suppose him to be far enough away. After many speculations upon the causes of his melancholy, he was further enlivened by hearing Phylarchus opine that he was in love, and follow up this expression of opinion with a grinning sort of chuckle which deserved immediate death.

"Indeed!" replied Euphorion, with a smile. "I suppose you have no daughters yourself, Captain?"

"Oh yes, I have though!" exclaimed Phylarchus, with much pomp and eagerness.

"Perhaps one of those young ladies has attracted my friend's admiration?" said Euphorion, with a slight sneer.

"Why, I should hardly think that," remarked the skipper, "for I ought to have said that I have but one daughter, and that she was not born till yesterday. Indeed I have been putting off embarking in order to wait for the youngster's coming."

"Herodotus is certainly a very strange man as far as ladies are concerned," said Euphorion, turning the conversation. "He never cares to talk about them, and as for his conduct, one would think he was a priest sworn to celibacy. Almost the only time I ever remember him to have referred to a lady, was at the procession of the Great Panathenæa last year, when all the gallants in Athens crowded as usual to see the lines of noble maidens bearing their sacred baskets to the Acropolis. Then he asked me the name and family of one of the plainest virgins in the whole procession; and what was more remarkable than all, my daughter, whom he had never to my knowledge seen before in his life, and who is said by all who have seen her to be as handsome as any girl in Athens,—she was walking by the side of the ugly damsel, and yet he never made the slightest remark concerning her. He certainly is a strange man."

"Zeus preserve us!" cried the captain; "I would wager a talent to a drachma, your daughter is the very girl. Herodotus has talked to me a score of times about a beautiful maiden whom he saw in the procession, and described her as walking by the side of a tall virgin with a Scythian expression of countenance and a cast in her left eye. Now I remember it, he mentioned that he had asked you the name of the plain lady, in the hope that your reply would have enabled him to discover the pretty one."

The reader will readily imagine that by this time the couch of Herodotus had become a bed of thorns. It flashed across him that for many months past he must have lived under the same roof as the beautiful form

which had bewitched his imagination. He knew not what to do. The conversation between Euphorion and Phylarchus was henceforth carried on in whispers, and did not terminate until a very late hour. At length, almost worn out with suspense and excitement, the morning dawn began to glimmer in his room, and he fell into an uneasy slumber.

We need not describe in detail the events of the few days which remained before the embarkation. Euphorion had ascertained that Herodotus would certainly return to Athens in the following spring, if not in the following autumn; and therefore had no wish to hurry matters to a conclusion. Herodotus was so far blessed that his host brought him into the presence of his daughter; and though there could be no opportunity for conversation, yet our traveller found that the maiden was still more beautiful than even his dreams had told him. He likewise learned that her name was Euphrosyne; and his countenance so unequivocally betrayed his emotions, that Euphorion was perfectly satisfied of the truth of Phylarchus's disclosure.

It was sunrise, on a fine morning in July, that Herodotus and Phylarchus embarked at the Piræus and began to sail in a southerly direction along the eastern coast of the Peloponnesus towards the island of Crete. It was the captain's intention, on reaching the island, to sail along its northern shore towards Cape Salmone at its eastern extremity, and thence to make a bold run to Egypt. On the way, however, Phylarchus stopped some days to trade at Corinth and the port of Argos, and again stopped at two or three places on the northern coast of Crete to lay in more wine; so that it was getting towards the end of August before he reached the eastern side of the island. Now in the autumn season the wind generally blows in the Archipelago from the north-west, and Phylarchus had depended upon this wind to carry him safely and swiftly

to Egypt. No sooner, however, had he doubled the eastern promontory of Crete, than the wind changed and began to blow from the south; and he had nothing for it but to sail slowly along the southern coast of the island, and look out for a convenient harbourage where he could anchor until the wind changed. Accordingly, after two or three days' sailing, they reached an open roadstead, or rather two roadsteads contiguous to each, known to navigators by the name of Fair Havens. Seven or eight days passed away, and still there was no sign of a change, and many and anxious were the colloquies between Captain Phylarchus and his most practised officer. At last Phylarchus informed Herodotus of the result of their counsels. "You see," said the worthy captain, bringing out a curiously graven brass plate, "this is a picture of the sea and the surrounding countries. There is Greece on one side, and Asia Minor on the other; and here, lower down, is Crete, where we are now anchored. South-west of us is Cyrene which, if the Etesian winds from the north would blow again, we could reach in eight or nine days. South-east of us is Egypt, which we could not reach in double the time. Now the season is getting too late for us to reach Egypt safely, even if the Etesian winds were to spring up; whilst with prosperous weather we might easily reach Cyrene, where I could buy silphium and do a good trade; and next spring I could coast eastward, you see, along the Libyan coast towards Egypt. I am therefore determined to leave Fair Havens to-morrow morning, and coast more to the westward, where we can anchor in a port named Phœnice, and start for Cyrene with the first change in the wind."

Herodotus of course acquiesced in this arrangement, which, indeed, he would have been obliged to do under any circumstances. But next morning it was discovered that the wind had fallen off altogether, and the ship was fairly becalmed. Phylarchus, however, was bent upon

getting to Phœnice. Provisions were beginning to run short, and little could be obtained at Fair Havens. The crew, therefore, took to their oars; and thus the vessel slowly moved through the calm blue water, and being heavily laden, four more days elapsed before she reached the western port. At Phœnice Phylarchus was enabled to reprovision the ship; but still the calm continued; and, at length, he ordered his men once more to take to their oars, and make an effort to row the vessel to Cyrene.

All this time the weather had been remarkably beautiful; and, in spite of the depressing influence of the calm, Herodotus had felt so inspirited by the clear blue sky and sparkling waves, that he seemed to have recovered much of his old cheerfulness. The nights, too, were glorious beyond all conception. The stars, which to the captain were merely guiding points by which to steer his vessel, were to our young traveller the gates of Olympus; or the beacon fires, which conducted the spirits of the blest to the thrones of the immortals. Then, in those mighty communings, the mysterious spell of love would seem to thrill through his heart and move him almost to tears; or the remembrance of the deep mysteries into which he had been initiated would inspire him with strange longings for a purer and better life in a world of gods and spirits. Then he would feel that he was alone, that none could sympathise with him; and thus even the society of the honest skipper, which had so often amused and interested him in previous voyages, became almost distasteful; for how could he talk to the bluff and jovial old sailor of those bright visions of love and immortality which floated before his raptured soul.

Meantime the honest captain paid not the slightest attention either to the sentimental or philosophical abstraction of his dreamy passenger. In fact, all his thoughts were directed to the progress of his ship towards Cyrene. On getting a little out to sea, a very slight breeze blew from the north, and all sail was set for the purpose of

catching every breath; but still the progress made was so slight, that the sailors were obliged to keep to their oars. The morning of the first day from leaving Phœnice had thus gently passed away, and the afternoon had more than half followed it, when Phylarchus, who was standing on the deck looking out for a wind, suddenly cried out, "Lower all sail!" The men shipped their oars, and sprang up and obeyed the order with the utmost alacrity. Herodotus had just time enough to see a long white cloud moving from the north-east along the surface of the sea, when a terrible typhonic wind, called by the ancients Eurakylon, but known in our days as a Levanter, blew violently against the ship; and had not her sails been lowered in time, would have thrown her on her beam ends. In a few minutes the storm had rapidly increased in fury; the sky was completely overcast, and the vessel scudded, under bare poles and with cracking timbers, nobody knew whither.

Herodotus, and indeed all the crew, were now terribly alarmed; and the only men who seemed calm and undisturbed in the midst of the tempest were the captain and his ancient steersman. The wind was after all blowing in the right direction for Cyrene; and if no casualty occurred, no immediate danger was to be anticipated. Phylarchus assisted his steersman in holding the two rudders; but the night came on as black as pitch; and as not a star was to be seen, so it was impossible to know if they were steering correctly.

It is not our purpose to describe a storm, for tempests presented the same character in ancient times as in our own days. The night passed without the slightest intermission, but the wind lulled the next day for a short time, and enabled the crew to secure their boat which had been towed at their stern, and to lash it to the side of the ship. Phylarchus also contrived by the assistance of his men to undergird the vessel, that is, to pass ropes and chains in a

horizontal direction round the ship from stern to prow in several circles, to keep her timbers well together. Scarcely, however, had this work been accomplished, when the tempest broke out with increased fury. The sea dashed over the vessel's sides, and every now and then all hands were engaged in baling out the water. Many of the sailors had never before been out of sight of land, and these continued to exclaim that they were being carried to destruction, and loudly offered up the most frantic prayers and made the most extravagant vows to all the gods and goddesses in the Greek calendar. In the midst of the tumult, Phylarchus took Herodotus on one side, and said to him, "I know these fellows: when they have done praying, and are tired of baling out the water, they will rush to the wine-skins and drink like Scythians. Now I believe we can weather the storm, and should like to save my cargo; but still I would sooner lose freight, vessel, and all, than give up my authority to a parcel of drunken madmen. There are only two men I can rely on, that is the steersman and yourself. The steersman has got the command of the rudder, and I want you to take the command of the wine-skins. Here is a boarding pike, and a spear, and a dagger to keep at your breast. Listen to no parleying, but strike down the first man that approaches!"

Herodotus mechanically took the arms, and felt that he had a duty to perform. The roaring of the tempest, the blackness of the sky, and the terrible aspect of the billows, had hitherto filled him with fear and trembling; and his prayers to the gods for safety were only interrupted from time to time by the healthy exercise of baling. Now, however, that Phylarchus had placed him at an important post, and told him distinctly what was the danger, and what he was to do, he fixed his thoughts almost entirely upon the sailors on one hand, and the wine on the other. He no longer prayed for deliverance, nor suffered his mind to dwell upon his poor mother and the beautiful

Euphrosyne. He grasped his spear with energy, and eagerly gazed through the angry darkness for the approach of an enemy. Meantime he heard the hoarse voice of Phylarchus, competing, as it were, in every direction with the tumultuous howling of the storm. The worthy captain had served out a measure of wine and water to all his crew, and was encouraging them to the utmost, both by his words and example, in emptying the vessel of the heavy seas which she was continually shipping. Ever and anon, however, his indignation was aroused by the ill-timed piety of the more lazy and cowardly of the sailors. He laid about him most vigorously with a rope's end, and poured out a volley of practical exhortations which did equal credit to the good sense and religious belief of the tough seaman. "Now, my men, no skulking!" he cried. "The gods have given you arms and legs, and will help those that help themselves. They would sooner see brave men working to the utmost, than a parcel of cowardly lubbers ranting and praying. We have had plenty of time to pray in port and in calm weather, and directly we reach Cyrene I will offer sacrifices enough; but now our duty is to keep the vessel afloat till morning, and then to see where we are. If we have any man aboard who feels that he has so often failed in his vows, and been impious towards the gods, that he must needs offer up his prayers now, that man must be thrown to the waves, for be assured that he is the man for whom the gods are now punishing us."

Such, so far as Herodotus could hear, was the spirit of the captain's addresses; but though so apparently convincing in their reasoning, and moreover strengthened by the intermingling of blessings and curses, and further enforced by the judicious and energetic application of the rope's end, yet he could plainly distinguish the sound of mutinous complaints and grumblings amongst the seamen. At last he saw a form approaching. A man had evidently

skulked away from his duty, and was gliding through the darkness towards the place where the wine was stored. Herodotus stood perfectly silent, and as erect as he could manage amidst the tossing of the billows, and with the spear in his hand.

"Who are you?" cried the man.

"Hades!" groaned Herodotus, and thrust the spear at his head with a directness of aim which would infallibly have speared his eye out, had not the intruder been so horrified at the supernatural reply as to fall backwards at the instant, and scramble away for his life.

Herodotus let him go, and made no noise, though his arm was rather jarred from having executed an energetic thrust, without meeting with any resistance; but no further attempt was made upon his post.

Morning at last came, and with it a cessation of the storm. A leak was discovered and stopped, and in a few hours nearly all traces of the tempest had passed away, and the vessel, though considerably shaken, was sailing gaily towards the south. Phylarchus was only afraid that he had been carried a little too much towards the west, and therefore stood in danger of being driven on the quicksands of the Syrtis. In three days, however, he came in sight of land, and recognised the country; and the next afternoon steered his ship into the harbour of Apollonia, which belonged to the city of Cyrene.

Egypt was almost as far from Cyrene as Athens, but as the voyage was a coasting one for the entire way, and Phylarchus was well acquainted with the route, he determined to proceed to Egypt before the conclusion of the sailing season. Accordingly he only anchored at Apollonia for a few days, to enable him to refit and take in a small quantity of silphium, which was in very great request throughout Greece; and he then set out to complete his voyage.

This stay at Apollonia enabled Herodotus to reside for

awhile in the city of Cyrene. This city was most beautifully situated about ten miles from the shore, and on the edge of a mountain-terrace, about 1800 feet above the level of the Mediterranean. The country is at present known by the name of the Green Mountain; and the region of Cyrenaica, of which Cyrene was the capital, is perhaps the most delightful region on the surface of the globe. It consists of a table land running parallel with the coast, and sinking down towards the Mediterranean Sea in a succession of terraces clothed with verdure, and well watered by mountain springs. These terraces, including the upper terrace upon which Cyrene was situated, are thus exposed to the cool sea breezes from the north, and are sheltered by the mass of the mountain, from the sands and hot winds of the Sahara on the south; whilst the different elevations enjoy a great diversity of climates, and in the time of Herodotus produced a succession of harvests which lasted for eight months out of the twelve. At the foot of the terrace on which Cyrene was built, was a fine sweep of table land, most beautifully varied with wood, among which were scattered tracts of barley and corn, and meadows nearly always covered with verdure. Ravines, the sides of which were thickly planted with trees, intersected the country in various directions, and supplied channels for the mountain streams in their passage to the sea. The Cyrenæans took advantage of the descent in terraces, to shape the ledges into roads, leading along the side of the hill; and these drives are to this day distinctly lined with the marks of chariot wheels, deeply indented in the stony surface.

This beautiful country had been colonised by the Greeks about two centuries before Herodotus's visit, under circumstances which, whilst they carry the reader back to the mythical times, are singularly illustrative of the establishment of Hellenic colonies generally.

During the Argonautic expedition in search of the

Golden Fleece, the Argonauts anchored for awhile at the island of Lemnos, which they found to be entirely destitute of men; for the women of the island, having been exasperated by jealousy and ill-treatment, had murdered all their fathers, husbands, and brothers. After some little demur, the Argonauts were permitted to land, and form alliances with the widows, but soon departed from their new wives to fulfil the objects of their expedition. The children of the Argonauts and Lemnians were henceforth known by the name of Minyans.

Some time after this, a wandering Pelasgian tribe, which had settled in Attica, was expelled for some cause or other by the Athenian people, and took refuge in Lemnos; where it succeeded in driving out the Minyans, and occupying their lands. In reference to these Pelasgians we may likewise mention, that in order to revenge themselves on Athens, they afterwards carried off a number of Athenian women who were celebrating a religious festival, and made them their wives.

Years passed away, and when the Attic women began to have families, a feud arose between their sons and the sons of the Pelasgian ladies, in which the Attic boys always got the upper hand. Accordingly, the Pelasgians murdered all the Athenian women and children in the island, and in consequence of this crime, and of the previous murder of all the Lemnian men, the island obtained a terrible notoriety throughout Hellas, and all bloody actions of unusual horror were called Lemnian deeds.

But to go on with our story. The Minyans having been driven out of Lemnos by the Pelasgians, set sail for Lacedæmon, and seating themselves on the heights of Mount Taygetus, not far from the city of Sparta, commenced lighting their fires. The Spartan people sent a messenger to demand who they were. They replied that they were Minyans, and descendants of those heroes who had sailed in the ship Argo. The Spartans then sent to ask what

was their design in encamping in the Spartan territory, and lighting their fires. They replied that they had been driven out of Lemnos by the Pelasgians, and had come to the Spartans, whom they regarded as their fathers; and they requested permission to dwell in the country, and share in the honours of the Spartan people, and receive an allotment of land. The Spartans, knowing that their old heroes, Castor and Pollux, had sailed in the ship Argo, acceded to these requests, and distributed the Minyans amongst their own tribes, and marriages were soon contracted between the two peoples.

After a few years had expired, the Minyans became insolent, and demanded a share in the sovereignty. For this and for other crimes the Spartans determined to put them to death, and accordingly threw them into prison. Now it was the custom of the Spartans to put their criminals to death in the night-time and never during the day. On the evening, therefore, before the execution, the wives of the condemned Minyans, being daughters of Spartan citizens, obtained permission to enter the prison and confer with their husbands; and then, having changed clothes with the captives, the latter escaped in the womens' dresses, and again seated themselves on Taygetus.

At this time there lived an influential citizen at Sparta named Theras. He was brother to the wife of king Aristodemus*; and when Aristodemus died, he became guardian to his two infant nephews, Eurysthenes and Procles, who were the sons of Aristodemus, and heirs to the throne of Sparta. When, however, the two princes were old enough to ascend the throne and assume the joint sovereignty, Theras scorned to remain their subject, and determined on sailing away at the head of a band of emigrants, and establishing a colony. He now offered, if the Spartans would pardon the Minyans, to carry the latter with him in his colonising expedition. This offer

* See vol. i. page 132.

was accepted, and Theras set sail in three thirty-oared galleys with a multitude of volunteers from the several Spartan tribes, and a large proportion of the Minyans; the remaining Minyans preferring to remove to the country of Elis in western Peloponnesus, where they subsequently founded six cities. Theras sailed to one of the Sporades, or "scattered islands" in the Ægean, which was henceforth named Thera after him, and here he founded his colony.

We now come to the colonisation of Cyrene, which took place many years after the establishment of Theras and his followers. A descendant of Theras, named Grinus, succeeded to the sovereignty of the island of Thera, and on one occasion proceeded to Delphi with a deputation of the principal citizens to sacrifice a hecatomb to Apollo on behalf of the colonists. When, however, Grinus was consulting the oracle, the pythoness ordered him to build a city in the far-off territory of Libya in Africa. Grinus replied that he was too old to establish such a colony himself, and prayed the god to order one of the younger men who accompanied him to undertake the task, and at the same time pointed to a member of his deputation named Battus, who was a Minyan. This was all that took place; and when Grinus and the deputation had left Delphi, they paid no further attention to the commands of the oracle.

But Apollo was not disposed to overlook the disobedience of his followers. During the seven years which followed, not a drop of rain fell upon Thera; and at the expiration of that period only one tree remained in all the island. The Theræans then sent a deputation to Delphi to consult the oracle upon this continued disaster, and were told that they had failed to obey the behests of the god, for they had not attempted the colonisation of Libya. The Theræans were now in a state of utter perplexity; for no one knew anything of Libya, or even where it was

situated. At last they despatched messengers to Crete to inquire if any of the Cretans, or any strangers settled amongst them, had ever visited Libya; and the messengers were fortunate enough to find a dyer of purple named Corobius, who said that he had once, during a voyage, been driven by the winds to the Libyan coast, and also to an island named Platea, which lay off the Libyan shore. Corobius was induced by a promise of reward to return with the messengers to Thera; and a small expedition was soon organised, and sent out under the conduct of Corobius to the Libyan island of Platea.

In due time the expedition reached Platea, upon which the men who accompanied Corobius left him there, and returned to Thera to announce their success. The Theræans then selected one member from every Theræan family by lot, and sent them in two fifty-oared galleys under the leadership of Battus, to colonise Platea; but so much time had elapsed, that Corobius, who only had provisions for a few months, would have been starved to death, had he not been fortunately relieved by a Samian merchantman bound for Egypt, who was driven to the island by stress of weather.

Such was the Theræan tradition of the first establishment of a Greek colony in Libya. The inhabitants of Cyrene, however, at the time when Herodotus visited the city, had another version of the story, which they told thus: —

In ancient times there was a city in Crete called Axus, and the king of the city was named Etearchus. This king had a daughter named Phronima, and when his wife died and he married again, the step-mother used Phronima with the utmost cruelty, and falsely accused her of having stained the honour of the royal house. King Etearchus was thus prevailed on by his wicked wife to have Phronima put to death. He induced a Theræan merchant, who visited Crete, to swear to serve him in

anything he should desire, and then delivered up his daughter to the merchant, and commanded him to take her away and throw her into the sea. The Theræan was very much grieved at the deceitfulness of this oath, but when out at sea he evaded it by merely binding Phronima with ropes and letting her down into the waves and drawing her up again, and he then carried her in safety to Thera. Here Phronima married a man of distinction, and had a son who was named Battus, because he lisped and had an impediment in his speech.

When Battus reached man's estate he went to Delphi to consult the oracle for a cure for his stuttering, upon which the pythoness gave him the following answer: —

> "Battus, you come to ask about your voice;
> But Phœbus sends you to the Libyan shore,
> To colonise the land which teems with sheep."

Battus asked how and with what force he was to attempt to obey this seemingly impossible command; but he only received in answer the same response as before, and, accordingly, returned to Thera without paying further attention to the oracle. Many troubles soon afterwards befel both Battus and the Theræans generally, and the latter sent to Delphi to inquire the cause of their misfortunes. The pythoness replied that they would fare better when Battus had founded a city in Libya. Accordingly the Theræans despatched Battus at the head of a band of emigrants in two fifty-oared galleys; but when the latter had sailed to Libya they found they could do nothing, and so returned to Thera. The Theræans saw the two galleys returning and considered that their island would be visited by still greater misfortunes if they permitted Battus to land; they therefore drove his ships from the shore, and ordered him to sail back to Libya. Battus was thus forced to comply, and reached the island of Platea, where he and his company landed and founded a city.

Two years passed away, but nothing prospered in the new colony. Battus and all his companions, excepting one who was left behind, then sailed to Delphi to tell the god that they had settled in Libya, according to the oracle, but found things no better than they were before. The pythoness, however, appeared to insist upon it that the island of Platea was not really included in Libya proper, for she thus replied: —

> "If you know sheep-abounding Libya—you
> Who never have been there—better than I
> Who have been, I must deem you wondrous wise."

Battus and his companions then sailed back again, and having taken on board the man whom they had left at Platea, they proceeded to the main land opposite the island, and settled in a beautiful district named Aziris where they remained for six years. In the seventh year the native Libyans in the neighbourhood induced them to leave Aziris by promising to conduct them to some lands which were far better adapted for a settlement. Accordingly the guides artfully led them through the finest part of the country, during the night, and at last reached a fountain named Thestes, which was sacred to Apollo. This district was pointed out by the guides as the most fitting locality for a settlement, "for here," said they, "the heavens are open;" and the Theræans followed their advice, and thus founded the city of Cyrene.

Such was the origin of the important colony of Cyrene. The early settlers took their wives from amongst the Libyans, and thus the population was largely infused with Libyan blood; but as the colonists increased in numbers, they were regarded as a superior race, and maintained a decided rule over all the native tribes in their neighbourhood. The kings of Cyrene were alternately called Battus and Arcesilaus; and, after the conquest of Egypt by the Persians, paid tribute to the Persian power. At

the time of Herodotus's visit, however, the Persian troubles in Egypt had tempted Cyrene to keep back her tribute, and assert her independence. Our traveller would have very much liked to have stayed longer at Cyrene, and learnt more of the internal state of the colony, but the impatience of Phylarchus hurried him away to Egypt, whither we must now accompany the voyagers.

CHAP. XXXIII.

EGYPT, B. C. 457—455.

VOYAGE FROM CYRENE TO EGYPT.—GEOGRAPHY OF EGYPT.—INUNDATION OF THE NILE.—APPEARANCE OF THE EGYPTIANS.—DRESS AND USAGES.—TROUBLES IN EGYPT OCCASIONED BY THE REVOLT OF INARUS.—ATHENIANS AND EGYPTIANS UNDER INARUS CAPITULATE TO THE PERSIANS.—HERODOTUS WINTERS AT NAUCRATIS, THE TRADING CITY.—SAIS.—TEMPLE OF NEITH, AND PALACE AND BURIAL-PLACE OF THE PHARAOHS.—ROCK CHAMBER.—TOMB OF OSIRIS.—FESTIVAL OF BURNING LAMPS.—BUTO.—TEMPLE OF HORUS, ON A FLOATING ISLAND.—BUSIRIS.—PAPREMIS.—EXTRAORDINARY CEREMONIES IN THE TEMPLE OF TYPHON.—BUBASTIS.—BEAUTIFUL TEMPLE OF PASHT.—FESTIVAL OF THE GODDESS.—HELIOPOLIS.—STORY OF KING PHERON.—PICTURE AND STORY OF THE PHŒNIX.—PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE DELTA.—CANALS.—EGYPTIAN CASTES.—FOOD OF THE EGYPTIANS.—ART OF MEDICINE.—ANTIQUE CUSTOMS.—ANCIENT DIRGE CALLED MANEROS.—MOURNINGS FOR THE DEAD.—EMBALMING.—EGYPTIAN WRITING.

THE voyage from Cyrene to Egypt was performed under most favourable circumstances. The weather was beautiful in the extreme, and a westerly wind carried our traveller to Canopus, at the mouth of the Canopic branch of the Nile, by the end of September, B. C. 457. Canopus was situated about twenty miles to the east of the more modern town of Alexandria; and from Canopus Phylarchus conducted his vessel up the Canopic branch to the port of Naucratis, which was the great resort for Greek merchants, and which a century or two earlier had been the only port where they were permitted to trade.

Egypt in primeval times consisted of a long rocky valley, terminating in a deep bay. The river Nile, which flowed from the highlands of Ethiopia, traversed the entire length of the valley, and emptied its waters into the bay.

In the time of Herodotus the Nile had covered the rocky valley with rich and teeming earth, and by its continual deposits had filled up the bay, and transformed it into that extensive and fruitful territory known as the Plain of the Delta. Egypt thus included, first, the long and narrow valley which follows the course of the Nile from the first cataract at Syene, northwards to Cairo; and, secondly, the extensive plain of the Delta, which stretches, in the form of a delta upside down ▽, from Cairo northwards to the Mediterranean. At Cairo the Nile divides, and in ancient times flowed towards the sea in seven different channels. The entire length of Egypt, from the first cataract to the Mediterranean, is about 500 English miles; the breadth of the Delta along the Mediterranean coast is about eighty-five miles, but the average width of the long valley between Cairo and the first cataract is only nine miles. The two mountain ranges which enclose the Nile valley are called the "Wings of the Nile." That on the east may be named the Arabian chain, that on the west the Libyan chain.

The end of September, which was the time when Herodotus was proceeding from Canopus to Naucratis, was likewise the time when the yearly inundation of the Nile had attained its maximum. The rising of the river had begun as usual in the last days of June. In the middle of August it had reached half its extra height, and by the 30th of September the river had risen twenty feet above its ordinary level. It was expected that it would remain stationary for about fourteen days, and then begin to subside, falling by the 10th of November to the same height it was in the middle of August, but not reaching its minimum until the 20th of the ensuing May.

The whole face of the Delta was of course totally changed by this extraordinary inundation. The country seemed to our traveller to be a sea, and the cities alone appeared above the surface of the flood like the islands of the Ægean.

On reaching Naucratis, Herodotus was much impressed by the strange manners and peculiar appearance of the mysterious natives. Their complexion was a reddish brown, which in the women partook of a yellowish tinge, but their hair was crisp and curly. Their figures were generally slight, and their average stature was not more than five feet and a half. Their dress consisted of a linen tunic, which they called a calasiris, and which was fringed at the border which covered the legs. Over this calasiris they wore a white woollen mantle, but never carried their woollen clothes into the temples, nor were buried in them, for that would have been accounted profane. The priests never wore the woollen mantle at all, and their shoes were made of the papyrus or byblus plant. Their usages were many of them directly opposed to those of other nations. Thus the women of Egypt went to the markets and shops themselves, whilst the men stopped at home and worked at the loom. The men carried burdens on their heads, but the women carried their burdens on their shoulders. The people took their meals in public in the front of their shops. They kept animals in their houses, kneaded dough with their feet, and practised circumcision. They would not allow any women to serve the office of priestess to any male or female deity, but employed men in all cases. They did not oblige sons to support their parents, but they compelled the daughters to do so. Whilst in other countries the priests wore their hair long, the Egyptian priests made a practice of shaving their heads; and whilst in other countries the people shaved their heads on the death of a near relation, the Egyptians suffered the hair to grow both on their heads and their faces, though on other occasions they were accustomed to shave. Other people fed on wheat and barley, but the Egyptians considered it a very great disgrace to make food of either kind of grain, and made their bread of spelt which they called zea. The Greeks, in writing and cyphering, moved the hands from left to right, as we do; but the Egyptians

moved theirs from right to left, and asserted that theirs was the only correct way. Polygamy, however, was not practised, for the men only married one wife, like the Greeks. Their salutations were excessively strange, and unlike those of any Greek nation, for instead of addressing one another in the streets, they made obeisance by suffering their hands to fall down as far as their knees. In their reverence for the aged they bore some resemblance to the Spartans. When the young men met their elders in the streets they turned aside to allow them to pass; and in all assemblies they rose from their seats on the approach of their seniors. Above all things, the people avoided every species of impurity. They all drank from cups of brass or silver, which were fresh scoured every day; and their linen garments were always clean, because they were frequently washed. The mere brushing of a hog against a man's garments was considered to be an impurity which could only be removed by the wearer plunging himself into the Nile. No Egyptian, man or woman, would come in contact with a Greek, nor use the knife, spit, or kettle, which had been used by a Greek; neither would they eat any beef, however good the meat might be, if the ox had been slaughtered or cut up by a Greek knife.

Herodotus stayed at Naucratis during the entire winter of B. C. 457—456; for though he would like to have sailed over the flood to Memphis and the pyramids, yet he was prevented by the war which was raging with greater violence than ever. The reader will doubtless remember that a formidable insurrection against the Persian supremacy had been headed by Inarus, the Libyan, and an Athenian fleet had sailed up the Nile as far as Memphis to aid in the revolt. At first the insurgents, assisted by the Athenians, had gained brilliant advantages; and the Persian king, Artaxerxes, had been so alarmed at the presence of the Athenians in Egypt, that he had sent an

envoy to Sparta to try and bribe the Spartans to invade Attica. The envoy failed, and Artaxerxes then sent to Egypt an augmented Persian force under the command of Megabyzus which changed the fortune of the war. After an obstinate struggle, Megabyzus had driven the Athenians and their Egyptian allies out of Memphis into an island of the Nile called Prosopitis. This last event took place just after Phylarchus reached Naucratis. Megabyzus followed up his success by blockading the island, but could not take it for eighteen months longer. At last, early in the spring of B. C. 455, he turned the arm of the river, and thus laid the channel dry round Prosopitis, and succeeded in storming the island by land. Inarus capitulated on condition that the lives of the Egyptians and of his Athenian allies should be spared. Some of the Athenians escaped by land to Cyrene, others were carried to Persia with Inarus, but were subsequently put to death, contrary to the articles of the treaty.

Herodotus, as a native of Halicarnassus, which still paid tribute to Persia, did not feel himself to be in any personal danger. The Greeks were at that time unusually popular amongst the natives of the Delta in consequence of the aid received from Athens; whilst he knew that the Persian general, Megabyzus, was acquainted with his father Lyxes, and was even bound to him by acts of personal friendship. He, however, remained at Naucratis with Phylarchus during the winter; but in the commencement of spring Phylarchus hurried back to Athens with great expedition, leaving our traveller behind. During the twelve months which ensued before the taking of Prosopitis, Herodotus visited the principal cities of the Delta which we shall now describe; and after the final re-conquest of the country by the Persian army, he visited Memphis and the Pyramids, and made those researches into the religion and history of the

Egyptian people on which we shall have occasion to dwell in a future chapter.

The city of Naucratis contained nothing much worth mentioning. It was, in fact, exclusively a trading city. It had been originally founded by some Ionian merchants from Miletus, and was chiefly peopled by Greek residents. Prior to the reign of Psammitichus, about B. C. 680, Egypt had presented the same attitude towards the Greeks as the Chinese have presented towards European strangers; and even down to the reign of Amasis, B. C. 570, the city of Naucratis was, like the port of Canton, the only mart in Egypt where the Greek merchants were permitted to trade. If any Greek entered any other mouth of the Nile excepting that at the Canopic branch, he was obliged to swear that he had been driven there against his will, and then to try in the same ship to reach the Canopic mouth. If contrary winds prevented his effecting his purpose, he was forced to unload his goods, and carry them in barges round the coast of the Delta, and thus to reach Naucratis. Amasis, however, did his best to encourage the Greeks to settle in his dominions. He gave Naucratis as a residence for those Greeks who wished to settle in the country; and to those who only wished to trade with Egypt by sea, he granted places where they might erect altars and temples. One of these temples, named the Hellenium, was very large and celebrated, and had been erected at the common charge of the most important Greek cities in Asia Minor.

From Naucratis Herodotus proceeded to the great city of Sais, the ancient capital of the Delta. Sais was the chief seat of the worship of the Egyptian goddess, Neith, whom the Greeks supposed to be the same as Athena. It contained a splendid temple of Neith and the royal palace and burial-place of the Pharaohs, as well as the tomb of the national deity, Osiris. The temple was grand beyond all description; and here, for the first time, He-

rodotus was impressed with the mysterious and solemn character of the Egyptian religion. The temples of Greece impressed the visitor with admiration at the beauty, the harmony, and the grace of those exquisite creations of refined and thoughtful intellect; but as Herodotus penetrated those gigantic masses which compose an Egyptian temple, he was filled with awe and reverence; he saw, not the elegance and loveliness of classic art, but the solemn approaches to the inner dwelling-place of deity. A long paved avenue led to the grand entrance, lined on each side with colossal sphinxes — mysterious compounds of the human form with that of a lion or of a ram — thus denoting the union of intellect and strength in the divine attributes. At the termination of the avenue, and in front of the vast entrance, stood colossal figures, in attitudes of profound repose. One of these statues, seventy-five feet long, had been overturned, probably at the time of the Persian conquest of the country, and was lying on its back. The entrance itself consisted of a lofty gateway between two huge wings, or oblong pyramidal moles, flat at the top, and of immense breadth, height, and thickness. These were called the propylæa, and were covered with sculptures. They had been built by Amasis, and surpassed all others in Egypt, both in height and breadth, as well as in the massive dimensions and fine quality of the stones. Over the gateway, between the propylæa, was the emblem of Agathodæmon, the Good Genius, consisting of a Sun supported by two asps with outspread vulture's wings. Passing through the gateway, Herodotus entered a spacious court, open to the sky, and surrounded by a colonnade. This court was intended for the general congregation of worshippers. At the other extremity of the court was the pronaos, or portico, supported by columns, and leading to a covered court or hall, also supported by pillars. Beyond this hall was the proper temple or holy recess, which contained the sacred image of the

goddess, and to which a worshipper was only conducted on solemn occasions. This more sacred portion of the temple was not, of course, entered by Herodotus. A priest, however, who conducted him over a large portion of the temple, and who was treasurer of the temple, or rather registrar of the treasury, informed him that the recess was divided into four saloons, and that only the last saloon contained the sacred image; and that on both sides of the saloons, as well as behind them, were corridors leading into chambers and apartments for the use of the priests, surrounded by outer walls, which carefully protected them from the gaze of the vulgar crowd. By means of the light which fell through apertures in the roof, our traveller was enabled to see the several sculptures and paintings which adorned the walls; and the registrar was clever enough, not only to explain their meaning, but also to extract a very much larger sum for the good of his order than Herodotus had had the slightest idea of offering.

The whole temple was situated in a sacred enclosure, consisting of a large square of consecrated ground, surrounded by a wall. Within this inclosure were buried many of the Pharaohs. The tomb of Amasis was there, consisting of a large stone chamber, decorated with columns shaped like palm leaves, and other ornaments. Inside the chamber were folding doors leading to the sepulchre. Amasis had been a great benefactor to the temple, for besides building the splendid propylæa, he had dedicated the colossal statues and sphinxes. He had likewise procured huge stones for repairs, and had conveyed immense blocks of granite all the way from the first cataract, which was twenty days' journey off. One of these excited the astonishment and admiration of Herodotus almost more than anything else. This was a monolith, or chamber, hewn out of a single stone. Two thousand river navigators had been occupied for three

years in conveying this stupendous rock-chamber from the first cataract. Outside it was thirty-one feet long, twenty feet broad, and twelve feet high; the interior chamber was twenty-seven feet long, eighteen feet broad, and seven and a half feet in height. It had evidently been intended to form the cella for the reception of the image of Neith, but it was lying outside the inclosure, and near the gateway. The registrar told Herodotus that Amasis had been restrained by a religious scruple from having it brought within the inclosure, because the architect had heaved a deep sigh from weariness whilst it was being drawn along. Our traveller, however, was subsequently informed that it remained outside the temple wall because it crushed one of the men who were employed at the levers used for moving it.

Within the enclosure, and extending along that entire side of the enclosure wall which ran behind the holy recess, was the splendidly carved tomb of the great national deity Osiris. Near it were a number of large stone obelisks, and also an extensive circular lake, ornamented with a stone margin or facing. On one particular night every year a dramatic representation of the adventures of Osiris was performed by the Egyptians on the surface of this lake, under the name of Mysteries; but Herodotus could not learn what the mysteries were until some time afterwards, when he was residing at Memphis. On the same night was celebrated the great annual festival in honour of Neith, called the Festival of the Burning Lamps. The worshippers of this goddess assembled at Sais to sacrifice; and they then kindled a great number of lamps round each of their houses. These lamps were small vases filled with salt and oil; and the wicks floated upon the surface and kept alight throughout the night. This festival was by no means confined to Sais, for every Egyptian throughout the country, though he might not be able to attend the sacrifice in person, was required to ob-

serve the lighting of the lamps, and thus all Egypt was illuminated on the night of the festival.

From Sais Herodotus journeyed to the large city of Buto, which contained a temple of Horus and Pasht, the son and daughter of Osiris and Isis, and identified by the Greeks with Apollo and Artemis. There was, also, another temple of Leto, which was much larger and more celebrated, and contained an oracle. The propylæa of this last temple were sixty feet high; but the most wonderful thing within the enclosure wall was the holy recess. Each side of this recess was hewn out of a single stone, the whole forming a perfect cube, of which each side measured sixty feet. Another block was laid on the top and formed the roof, and overhung six feet on each side.

Not far from the temple of Leto was a large and deep lake, and in this lake was an island called Chemmis, which the Egyptians declared to be a floating island. Herodotus, however, did not see it either float or move, and doubted the truth of the statement, though he was not foolish enough to contradict it. Upon it stood a large temple of Horus or Apollo, in which three altars were erected. A great number of palm and other trees, some producing fruit and others not, also grew upon the island. The island itself was celebrated in the old mythology of Egypt as the spot where the goddess Leto concealed the infant Horus from the destroying hand of Typhon; and it was said that it was made to float from this circumstance.

From Buto Herodotus went to Busiris, where he saw a large temple of Isis, but did not enter it.

Papremis was the next city he visited. Papremis contained a temple of Ares, by which name the Greeks seem to have referred to the Egyptian evil principle, known by the name of Typhon; our traveller, however, did not find much to engage his attention. The sacrifices and ceremonies in honour of this deity were much the same as

those in other places in honour of other gods; excepting that after sunset the following performance took place. The statue of the god was to be moved from one temple to another. Accordingly it was placed in a small wooden shrine, gilded all over, and laid upon a four-wheeled car. The priests then separated themselves into two parties. One party made certain extraordinary gestures round the statue; whilst the other party armed themselves with clubs, and took up a position in the vestibule of the temple to which the statue was to be conveyed. Meantime the general body of worshippers, amounting to more than a thousand men, armed themselves with similar clubs, and posted themselves opposite the vestibule. The party of priests who were standing round the statue then prepared to draw forward the car; but the armed priests in the vestibule refused to give it admittance. Then the crowd of armed worshippers advanced to the assistance of their god. An obstinate combat ensued, the crowd of worshippers endeavouring to gain admittance for the car, and the armed priests in the vestibule endeavouring to repel them, and each party attacking the other with their clubs. The Egyptians declared that no heads were broken during this religious combat, but Herodotus declined to believe the assertion. The inhabitants of Papremis stated that they instituted this festival from the following circumstance. They said that the mother of the god dwelt in the temple, and that the god on his return from foreign parts, where he had been educated, desired to see her. Her attendants, however, not having seen him before, refused to let him pass them, upon which he collected a band of men from another city, and attacked the servants, and thus obtained admittance.

Near Papremis was the field where Achæmenes and his Persians were defeated and slain by Inarus the Libyan in B. C. 460, at the first outbreak of the revolt. Herodotus saw many skulls and bones still scattered about, and he

particularly noticed that the Egyptian skull was much stronger and thicker than the Persian. This he supposed arose from the fact that the Persians wore turbans, whilst the Egyptians exposed their heads to the sun.

From Papremis Herodotus proceeded to Bubastis, which was famous for the worship of Bubastis or Pasht, the cat-headed goddess whom the Greeks identified with Artemis. Here the temple of Pasht attracted his warmest admiration; and, indeed, though many temples might have been larger or more costly, yet none were so pleasant to behold. It was surrounded by water, excepting at the entrance, for the Nile flowed past the back of it, and two canals branched off from the Nile and flowed round it as far as the entrance, one on the one side, and one on the other side. Each canal was 100 feet in breadth, and had its banks lined with trees. The temple was situated in the centre of the city, and could be looked down upon from every quarter; for its site had remained at its ancient level, whilst the streets and houses had been mounded up to a greater height than in any other Egyptian city. The sacred enclosure was an exact square, each side measuring the eighth of a mile, and it was surrounded by a wall beautifully adorned with sculptured figures. The propylæa were sixty feet in height, and carved with figures nine feet high. Within the enclosure and all round the holy recess was a grove of magnificent trees. A paved avenue, nearly half a mile long and 400 feet broad, and lined on each side with lofty trees, ran from the propylæa across the public market-place of the city to the temple of Hermes. Altogether, a more beautiful sanctuary could not be imagined.

The festival of Pasht was more rigidly observed by the Egyptians than any other; but its immense popularity seems to have arisen from the intoxication and other excesses in which the worshippers thought proper to indulge. Not less than 700,000 men, women, and

children were said to have been present at the city during the festival; and more wine was consumed on that occasion than during all the rest of the year. The people were conveyed to Bubastis by water, and numerous boats were crowded with persons of both sexes. During the voyage some of the women played upon cymbals, and some of the men upon flutes, whilst all the rest sung and clapped their hands. When they reached any town on their way, they brought the boat close to the bank. Some of the women then continued to play the cymbals; others shouted and reproached the women of the place; whilst others danced and made scoffing and contemptuous gestures. This festival was likewise celebrated by the sacrifice of an immense number of victims.

From Bubastis Herodotus went to Heliopolis, or "the city of the Sun," called On in the Old Testament.* It contained a temple of Helios or the Sun, the Egyptian Ra. Here King Pheron, the son of Sesostris, out of gratitude for his restoration from blindness, dedicated to Helios two obelisks, each of which was 150 feet high and twelve feet in breadth, and consisted of a single stone. The priests at Memphis subsequently told Herodotus a singular story concerning this king's blindness, which we may as well introduce here. On one occasion the inundation of the Nile reached the extraordinary height of twenty-seven feet, and a terrible wind having arisen, it tossed about the river in waves. King Pheron seeing this commotion, seized a javelin, and, with the utmost arrogance, threw it into the eddies of the river; but immediately afterwards he was seized with a pain in his eyes, and became blind. For ten years this blindness continued, but in the eleventh year an oracle was despatched to him from the temple of Leto, at Buto, importing that the period of his punishment had expired, and

* Genesis, chap. xli. v. 45.

that he might recover his sight by anointing his eyes with the spittle of a virtuous wife. This simple remedy, however, seemed for a long time to be unattainable. Neither the spittle of his own wife nor that of any other married lady appeared to have the slightest effect upon his blindness; but at last a virtuous woman was found, and he recovered his sight. He then, in the true spirit of poetic justice, married the lady who had restored him, and assembled all the others in one city and barbarously put them to death.

In the temple of Helios, Herodotus saw a picture of a sacred bird called the phœnix, which he had never seen alive; indeed, it seldom appeared in Egypt, and, according to the Heliopolitans, it only came on the death of its sire once in 500 years. In the picture the plumage was represented as being partly red and partly the colour of gold, and in outline and size the bird bore a strong resemblance to an eagle. The Heliopolitans told our traveller the following story connected with its appearance, which, however, he justly considered to be a fable. They said that the phœnix, when its father died, shaped an egg of myrrh as large as it could carry; and then, when it had satisfied itself that it really could carry it, the phœnix hollowed out the egg, and put its parent inside and closed up the hole. The weight was thus the same as before, and accordingly the phœnix carried the whole to the temple of Helios, and there buried it. But though the Heliopolitans were thus slightly addicted to the marvellous, yet Herodotus found them to be more learned in the history of their country than any other Egyptians; though the inhabitants of the Egyptian corn-lands generally were better acquainted with past events than any other class of men with whom he ever came in contact.

During the foregoing sojournings in the Delta, Herodotus began to form some notion of its shape and physical geography. He saw that it stretched northward towards the Mediterranean like a huge fan, whose green centre, from

the handle to the broad end, was represented by fertile meadows, plantations, and orchards, and whose semicircular border was formed by successive bands of marsh, sand-hills, and beach, beyond which was the blue expanse of the Mediterranean. The whole of this region was covered with beautiful cities, and adorned with magnificent temples, obelisks, and colossal statues. The soil consisted of a rich black alluvial deposit brought down by the river Nile from Ethiopia. The Nile had thus, as he was told and believed, filled up the bay which was subsequently occupied by the Delta, and thus the entire country was a gift of the river. At the same time, the inhabitants of the corn-lands had not the least trouble in cultivating their farms. They neither ploughed nor hoed; but when the river had inundated their fields, and then subsided, each man sowed his own corn and turned in swine, who thereupon trod in the seed, and subsequently at harvest-time trod out the corn, and saved the trouble of thrashing. The Delta was likewise intersected with canals in every direction. These had been dug in very ancient times by the multitude of captives which Sesostris had brought away from the distant countries which he had subdued. The same captives had likewise raised the cities so far above the surface of the plain as to preserve them from the waters of the yearly inundation; and at a subsequent period a later king, named Sabacon, had obliged every Egyptian criminal to heap up mounds round his own city.

The Egyptian people were divided into seven classes or castes; viz., priests, soldiers, herdsmen, swineherds, tradesmen, interpreters, and bargemen.

The priests were the principal caste, and their colleges were of course connected with the temples of the great cities. Thus there were the priests of Helios at Heliopolis, and the priests of Neith at Sais. Many priests were employed for the service of each deity, of whom one was appointed to be chief or high-priest, and the sacer-

dotal office of the father was inherited by his son. Extensive estates were attached to every temple, and belonged to each college of priests in common; and a bursar, or registrar, like the one at Sais, was appointed to manage the revenues, which had, however, suffered materially from the effects of the Persian conquest. Out of this common fund the necessaries of life were supposed to be supplied to the priests and their families belonging to each temple, so that none were obliged to expend any portion of their private property. A large quantity of beef and geese was cooked every day, and allowed to each of them, together with a certain measure of wine made from grapes; but they were never permitted to eat fish; and they considered beans to be so very impure that they abhorred the very sight of those vegetables. They shaved the whole of their bodies every third day to prevent the possibility of any vermin being found upon them whilst engaged in the service of the gods. Their garments were all made of linen, and their shoes of papyrus; and they washed themselves twice every day and twice every night.

The soldiers were a military race, and the most distinguished caste next to that of the priests. They were divided into Hermotybies and Calasires, and at one time numbered above 400,000 men. No member of this warrior caste was permitted to carry on any trade, but all were obliged to devote themselves entirely to the art of war, and this destination descended from father to son. Their pay consisted of the produce of their estates, for, like the priests, they were all landed proprietors, and each man possessed twelve acres of land free from all tribute. In the ancient times of the Pharaohs, 1000 Hermotybies and 1000 Calasires served as the king's body-guard, but were changed annually, and no man was appointed twice. Every one of these household troops received daily during his year of service five pounds' weight

of bread, two pounds of beef, and a quart of wine, in addition to the income which he derived from his estate. Military depôts were also formed on the frontiers,—namely, on the eastern frontier against the Arabs, Hebrews, and Syrians; on the western frontier against the wild tribes of Libya; and on the southern frontier, at the first cataract, against the Ethiopians.

The five remaining castes might be almost regarded as one class, for they were all excluded from the possession of land, from the privileges of the priest and military castes, and from every department of political life. They formed, in fact, the great working class, and King Amasis established a law which compelled every man, on pain of death, to present himself once a year before the magistrate of his district, and declare by what means he maintained himself. The herdsmen included the settled agricultural people who cultivated the corn-lands, and the nomade tribes who occupied the marshes of the Delta and the plains bordering on the desert. The swineherds were the Pariah caste of Egypt, for swine were an abomination to the Egyptians. A swineherd was excluded from all the temples, and no member of any other caste would take his daughter for a wife or give him a daughter in marriage. Once a year, however, a pig was offered up by every household to Osiris, and it was the swine that trod the corn into the earth after the yearly inundation; consequently, the race of swineherds was indispensable to the people. The traders comprised handicraftsmen, artists, chapmen, and merchants, and, as each trade was hereditary, this trade caste contained a great number of subdivisions. The interpreters were a caste of tolerably recent formation. King Psammitichus (B.C. 680) having gained the throne by the assistance of some Ionian and Carian mercenaries from Asia Minor, wished to open a communication between Egypt and Greece. Accordingly, he placed a number of Egyptian children under

the care of the Greek settlers to be instructed in the Greek language, and thus founded the caste; for the posterity of these children were henceforth regarded as a separate class, and called interpreters. The bargemen or steersmen were the navigators of the Nile, and of the canals of the Delta, which were, in fact, so many roads; and, during the yearly inundation, the boats were the only means of communication between the several cities.

The Egyptians generally lived on bread made from spelt, and on the flesh of such fish and birds as were not accounted sacred; that of geese and oxen was the most esteemed, and formed the exclusive food of the priests. Pork was never eaten excepting at one particular festival. Vines did not grow in Egypt, but the wines of Greece and Phœnicia were very largely imported, and very extensively consumed by all who could afford to purchase them. Those who could not buy the foreign growths drunk a kind of home-made wine or beer produced from barley, which, however, was very superior to the ale drunk by the lower orders in Greece. Radishes, onions, and garlic were also much consumed by the poorer classes. The Egyptians who inhabited the marshes of the Delta used the lotus for food, making bread of the pith, and likewise eating both the root of the plant and the fruit which it brought forth. These same marshmen also used the lower part of the papyrus plant for food, and fish dried in the sun. The art of medicine amongst the Egyptians was divided into several branches, each physician only applying himself to one disease. Medical practitioners abounded everywhere; some were for the eyes only, others for the head, others for the teeth, and others for the stomach.

It was not, however, so much the peculiarity of the habits and manners of the Egyptians as the antiquity attached to them, which made so deep an impression upon Herodotus. At convivial banquets, for instance,

in the houses of the wealthy a most strange and solemn custom was observed which might have been traced back to the death of Osiris. After the supper was over, a man carried round a coffin containing a wooden image made in exact imitation of a corpse. Showing this to each of the company, the bearer would cry, "Look upon this, and then drink and enjoy yourself; for, when dead, you will be like unto this." The conviviality of the party, however, would be scarcely disturbed by this gloomy apparition, and they would commence a night of hard drinking immediately after this apparently awful warning.

One of the most extraordinary relics of antiquity, as appeared to Herodotus, was a peculiar song which was preserved by the people, and must, in his opinion, have been handed down from the remotest times. In the Egyptian language it was called Maneros, and it exactly resembled the very ancient song sung by the Greeks under the name of Linus, and which was likewise sung, though under different names, both in Phœnicia, Cyprus, and elsewhere. The dirge was so peculiarly unearthly and remarkable, that Herodotus began to think that of all the wonders in Egypt it was the most especially wonderful whence the Egyptians obtained the song. The people, however, said that Maneros was the only son of the first king of Egypt, and that happening to die at an early age, he was honoured by this mourning dirge, which was the first and only song they ever had.

Modern scholars have generally imputed a mythic origin to this song. Herodotus, in his history which we shall hereafter describe, has told them that its origin was imputed to the eldest son of the first king of Egypt; and they have supposed him to have referred, not to the son of Menes, but to Horus, the son of Osiris. Its extreme antiquity, however, and the extraordinary manner in which it was retained by the entire nation, has led us to refer it back to a more certain historical event than a

mere myth, of which even the groundwork is doubtful. We remember with reverential fear the tenth last plague of Egypt, and its awful fulfilment; when, on one dark midnight, a thousand years before Herodotus was born, "the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon." The mental anguish of that dark night, "when there was a great cry in Egypt, and not a house where there was not one dead," may well have been transmitted to posterity in that mysterious dirge which made such a powerful impression upon Herodotus; for it was a grief too deep for tears, and too universal to be forgotten, as long as Egypt was a nation.

The loud mournings for the dead, Herodotus had frequent opportunities of witnessing during his residence in the Delta. When a man of any consideration died, all the females of his family smeared their heads and faces with mud, girded up their clothes, and wandered about the city with uncovered necks, beating their breasts, and accompanied by all their relations. The men also girded up their clothes and beat themselves in the same fashion. After this was over, the body was carried away to the embalmers to be embalmed.

This significant and expensive custom greatly excited the curiosity of our traveller. He could not help connecting the national attempt to render the body immortal, with that doctrine of the immortality of the soul into the mysteries of which he had been so recently initiated. There were three different modes of embalming, varying according to the circumstances of the deceased; and Herodotus carried his investigations to such an extent as to make himself acquainted with the actual details of each of these modes. A description of embalming is, however, by no means a lively or agreeable subject, and we shall not inflict it upon our readers, but merely observe that after

the embalment the body was wrapped in bandages of linen cloth smeared with gum, and then enclosed in a wooden case made to resemble a man, and placed in a sepulchral chamber. All persons, whether Egyptians or strangers, that were seized by crocodiles or drowned in the river Nile, were embalmed and adorned in the best manner, and buried in the sacred vaults; and the inhabitants of that city to which the body was carried were compelled by law to pay all the expenses. No person, however, not even the relations or friends of the deceased, were permitted to touch the body, excepting only the priests of the Nile, who buried it with their own hands as something more than human.

We shall conclude this rather long chapter with a brief description of the three different modes of Egyptian writing, viz., the hieroglyphic, the hieratic, and the enchorial; which, however, utterly defied the researches of Herodotus.

The hieroglyphic, a monumental writing, originated in the natural desire to paint such objects as were capable of being represented. The next step was the transition from real representations to symbolical, emblematical, or allegorical signs, representing ideas by physical objects. The last step was the adoption of phonetic characters to represent sounds by pictures of visible objects.

The hieratic, or sacerdotal linear writing, was a kind of shorthand way of writing the hieroglyphics, and included in some cases arbitrary characters in the place of pictures. It appears to have been restricted to the transcription of texts relating to sacred or scientific matters, and to a few, but always religious, inscriptions.

The enchorial, or common epistolary writing, was a system quite distinct from the hieroglyphic and hieratic, and chiefly included simple characters borrowed from the hieratic writing, to the exclusion of almost all pictured signs.

CHAP. XXXIV.

EGYPT, B.C. 455.

VOYAGE FROM NAUCRATIS TO MEMPHIS.—TRADITION OF THE FOUNDATION OF MEMPHIS.—MAGNIFICENT TEMPLE OF PTHAH.—PROPYLÆA AND COURT FOR APIS.—STATUE OF KING SETHON AND A MOUSE.—PYRAMIDS OF GIZEH.—ANCIENT HISTORY OF EGYPT.—ANNALS OF MANETHO.—STORIES OF THE PRIESTS OF PTHAH.—FEAT OF NITOCRIS.—CONQUESTS OF SESOSTRIS.—TRADITIONS OF HIS REIGN.—EXTRAORDINARY STORY OF THE TREASURE-CHAMBER OF RAMPSINITUS.—A GAME AT DICE IN HADES.—STORIES OF THE PYRAMID KINGS.—ACCOUNT OF CHEOPS AND DESCRIPTION OF HIS PYRAMID.—PYRAMIDS OF CHEPHREN AND MYCERINUS.—STORY OF MYCERINUS'S DAUGHTER.—SINGULAR ORACLE CONCERNING HIS DEATH.—APPEARANCE OF THE PYRAMIDS IN THE TIME OF HERODOTUS.—MUMMY CASE AND BONES OF MYCERINUS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.—PYRAMID OF BRICKS.

When Herodotus had completed his tour of the Delta, he continued to reside at the city of Heliopolis, and here, in the summer of B. C. 455, the news reached him of the complete destruction of the Athenian fleet and the forces of the Egyptian insurgents by the Persian general Megabyzus. Accordingly, in the following autumn, when the inundation was at its height, he proceeded to the great city of Memphis; and here he obtained permission to reside during the winter months, determining in the ensuing spring to get a passage on board a Nile boat proceeding towards the south, and thus endeavour to penetrate the far off regions of burning Ethiopia.

Memphis was the great capital of Middle Egypt, as Sais was of the Delta; but it claimed a far higher antiquity. It stood in a contracted part of the Nile valley, and commanded the communication between Upper or Southern Egypt and the Delta; and it was said to have

been founded by Menes, the first king of Egypt, in that primeval period ere the plain of the Delta had been formed by the alluvions of the Nile, and when, in fact, the Delta was a bay of the Mediterranean. According to an Egyptian tradition, Menes was said to have obtained a site for the city by the following contrivance. The Nile had previously flowed close to the foot of the sandy mountain range of Libya, on the western side. Menes dug a canal, elbowing out more in the centre of the valley, between the Libyan and Arabian mountains; and then, having dammed up the old channel of the Nile about twelve miles to the south of the site of Memphis, he conducted the river into the canal. It was on the ground thus recovered that Menes was said to have built the great city of Memphis, and to have protected it by a mound.

This tradition, however, was decidedly an invention, or rather, an exaggeration of the priests of Memphis, who retailed it to Herodotus. The Nile in reality has two channels. The one which Herodotus thought was the ancient channel, and which flowed close to the foot of the Libyan chain, was the northern part of that ancient branch of the river which is now called the canal of Joseph. The other channel, which he supposed to have been dug by Menes, and which flowed more in the centre of the valley, is the present bed of the river. What Menes, or whoever founded the city, appears really to have done, is to have protected Memphis by a deep moat, and thus to have given rise to the story we have narrated.

Memphis was especially celebrated for its walls, its citadel called the White Fortress, its ancient palace of the Pharaohs, its beautiful sanctuaries, and above all for its vast and wonderful temple of the Egyptian Pṭhah, the Hephæstus of the Greek mythology. This magnificent structure was said to have been originally founded

by Menes, but to have been successively enlarged and improved by successive Pharaohs, who each sought to leave behind him, in connexion with the national temple, a lasting monument of his own earthly magnificence and devotion to the gods. The temple was approached on each of its four sides by a wonderful avenue lined with sphinxes, and thus possessed four grand entrances, constructed upon the principles already described, and each of which was the work of a profuse and mighty sovereign. The temple proper, including the holy recess, stood in the centre of the entire building, and was said to have been constructed by Menes. The entrance, or propylæa, facing the south, was erected by King Mœris. The celebrated Sesostris employed the multitude of captives which he had brought from the various countries he had subdued, in conveying huge masses of stone to the temple; and he erected in front of the propylæa of Mœris six colossal statues, namely, himself and his wife, each forty-five feet high; and his four sons, each thirty feet high. Rampsinitus built the western propylæa, and erected two statues before it, each thirty-seven feet high, and respectively named Summer and Winter. Asychis built the eastern propylæa, which was by far the largest and most beautiful; for it was decorated with sculptured figures more than all the others, and exhibited a greater variety of architecture. Psammitichus erected the southern propylæa, and likewise built a court opposite, surrounded by a colonnade, which was supported by colossal statues eighteen feet high, and covered with sculptured figures. This court was intended for Apis, whenever that god should manifest himself in Egypt. Numerous other colossal statues were likewise within the sacred precinct; some in their proper position before one or other of the propylæa, but others overthrown in the recent internal war.

There was one statue, however, which requires especial

mention, for it not only excited much attention from Herodotus, but would have been even more interesting to the modern reader. This was a stone statue of King Sethon with a mouse in his hand, and bearing the following inscription: "Whoever looks on me, let him revere the gods." Sethon was king of Egypt at the time of the invasion of Sennacherib; and the statue was erected to commemorate the destruction of the Assyrian army. According to Holy Writ, the Assyrians were destroyed by an angel of Jehovah. Herodotus, however, was told by a priest of Pthah, that the destruction was occasioned by field-mice, who ate up the bow-strings, quivers, and shield-handles of the invaders. The priest either told a wilful falsehood, or else erred from ignorance, and Herodotus was of course easily misled. The fact was that the statue was undoubtedly erected in commemoration of the mighty deliverance, both of the Egyptian monarch and of Hezekiah, which is recorded in the Scriptures, for a mouse is the symbol in Egyptian hieroglyphics for destruction and slaughter.

About ten or twelve miles to the north-east of Memphis, and on the route towards Naucratis, were the celebrated pyramids known in our own time as the Pyramids of Gizeh. We shall have occasion to describe these in a future page, but it is here necessary to observe that the three largest were said to have been built by three celebrated kings, namely Cheops, Chephren, and Mycerinus.

The ancient history of Egypt stretches far back into the drear antique, to a period when the gods themselves dwelt among men, and were the sovereigns of the land. Manetho, an Egyptian priest, who lived about 150 years after Herodotus, compiled from the sacred books of the Egyptians a comprehensive history of the country. This history was written in three tomes or rolls of papyrus, and contained, first, the annals of the three successive

dynasties of gods, demigods, and spirits; and, secondly, the history of the thirty dynasties of mortal kings. The thirty dynasties of mortal sovereigns commenced with Menes, and ended with Nectabenus, the last native Egyptian king, who, in B. C. 350, contrived to rebel against Persia; and, according to the calculation of Manetho, the whole extended over a period of from 3000 to 5000 years. This history is lost, but a list of the kings and dynasties have been preserved by Julius Africanus and Eusebius; and their correctness is said to be generally confirmed by the hieroglyphic inscriptions on the monuments.

Herodotus had no such opportunities of studying the history of Egypt as the priest Manetho. He contrived to win the good opinion of the priests of Pthah, but they would not trust him with the sacred books; and even if they had done so, he could not have read them, for he was equally as ignorant of the sacred characters on the papyrus rolls as of the hieroglyphical pictures which everywhere decorated the monuments. Moreover those priests of Pthah who condescended to talk to the Greek foreigner were by no means the most literary of their order. Their historical knowledge was chiefly confined to those kings who had reigned at Memphis. They praised those sovereigns who had embellished their temple, and treated those as tyrants who had confined their attention to other buildings; whilst of those who had left no important monuments whatever they could only give a dry catalogue of names, which Herodotus cared not to remember. Moreover, they only related such particulars as were most gratifying to the national pride, or most calculated to arouse and interest such rich worshippers as might visit Memphis to offer sacrifice to Pthah.

To the modern reader the history of Egypt would be principally interesting so far as it illustrated the pages of Holy Writ; but at the same time we think he might be

amused by some of the ridiculous stories which the priests told Herodotus. They took up a book, and read him the names of 330 kings who they said had reigned prior to the accession of the celebrated Sesostris; and three hundred generations were supposed to be equal to ten thousand years. Of all this imposing list the only kings of whom the priests could relate any memorable deeds were three in number. The first was Menes, the founder of Memphis, and builder of the temple of Pthah. The second was a queen named Nitocris, who performed a most extraordinary feat. Her brother had previously occupied the throne, but had been slain by his subjects. She succeeded him, and determined to avenge his death. Accordingly she had an extensive chamber prepared under ground, and pretending that she was going to consecrate it, invited all the enemies of her brother to a great banquet in this magnificent subterranean saloon. In the middle of the feast she suddenly turned the river in upon them, and then committed suicide by throwing herself into a room which had been previously filled with ashes.

The third king whose acts were remembered by the priests was Mœris, the last king of the 330. He built the northern propylæa of the temple of Pthah, and dug the celebrated Lake Mœris, which we shall describe in a future page.

After these three the priests narrated the reigns of a regular line of kings. The first was Sesostris, who was said to have conquered the most distant regions in Europe, Asia, and Africa, and to have erected monuments of his conquests in the several countries. Sesostris, during his absence, had left his kingdom in the charge of his brother, and when he returned, this brother tried to compass his death. He invited Sesostris and his wife and six sons to an entertainment, and then suddenly left his guests alone, and surrounded the house with a large pile of burning wood. Sesostris took council of his wife in this emergency, and

she advised him to bridge the burning mass by extending two of his sons across the fire. Sesostris did so, and two of his sons were burned; but the rest stepped over the bodies and were saved. Sesostris then took revenge upon his brother, and spent the remainder of his reign in enlarging and beautifying the temple of Pthah, and in digging canals all over the Delta. In these works he employed the multitudes of captives whom he had reduced to slavery. It was Sesostris who first divided the land of Egypt equally among the Egyptian people, giving an equal square allotment to each. From these allotments were drawn the royal revenues, for the owner of each was required to pay a fixed yearly tax. If, however, the inundation of the Nile carried away any portion of an allotment, commissioners were sent by the king to ascertain how much the land had diminished, and what proportion of the land-tax should in future be paid by the owner. This circumstance is interesting, inasmuch as it was supposed by Herodotus to have originated the art of land-measuring, which subsequently passed over into Greece.

Sesostris was succeeded by Pheron, the same king who was miraculously cured of blindness; and he in his turn by Proteus; who again was succeeded by Rhampsinitus, of whom more extraordinary tales were told than of any other monarch whatever.

Rhampsinitus was in the possession of incredible riches, such as never before or after fell to the lot of any mortal monarch. To treasure up this wealth in safety was the one great object of his life, and for this purpose he built up a very strong chamber adjoining the palace wall. This chamber was so carefully and wonderfully made, that it was deemed by all men to be impregnable; and accordingly the King Rhampsinitus melted all his gold, and poured it into pots and jars of earthenware, and then stowed it away in the strong room which he had made.

The architect, however, had been unfaithful to his trust. He had fitted in one of the blocks of stone upon a secret pivot, so warily, that it might be easily taken out by two men or even by one. Before, however, he could take advantage of this breach of trust, a mortal disease overtook him. Feeling that his end was approaching, he summoned his two sons and explained to them how they might remove the stone, and thus become in reality the stewards of the king, and provide themselves with abundant sustenance. He died shortly afterwards, and the two sons hastened to remove the stone and carry off a great quantity of the treasure.

After awhile Rhampsinitus visited the strong room, and discovered that a large portion of his gold had been taken out of the pots; but he could accuse no one of the theft. as the seals on the door were unbroken, and the chamber seemingly well secured. After three or four more visits he found that his gold continued to decrease in the same mysterious manner. He therefore ordered man-traps to be made, and set them round the pots of gold and quietly awaited the result. In a day or two the brothers again entered the store and commenced loading themselves as before, when one of them was straightway caught in a trap. Perceiving that he was fairly tangled and unable to escape, he said to his brother, "Draw thy sword quickly and cut off my head; for if the king should see my face, he will recognise me and kill you likewise." The brother saw that the counsel was good, and immediately cut off the trapped man's head, and carrying it away with him, left the treasure as before.

Next morning the king entered his strong room, and was again lost in astonishment. There was the body of a thief caught in a trap, but the head was missing, and it was impossible to identify the headless trunk, whilst the chamber was apparently as secure as before. In this

perplexity he hit upon the following plan. He ordered the body to be hung against the wall, and placed sentinels over it with strict instructions to arrest any one, man, woman, or child, who should be seen moaning or weeping before it.

Meantime the widowed mother of the two young men was excessively sorrowful over the death of her son, and especially that the body should be ignominously exposed against the wall instead of being given into the hands of the embalmers. Accordingly she entreated her surviving son to contrive some means by which he could bring away the headless corpse, and threatened that if he did not do so speedily she would proceed at once to the royal palace and acquaint the king with the whole history of the robbery of his treasury.

The son remonstrated with his mother for awhile, but at last acceded to her wishes. He went and purchased twelve mules, and loaded them with large skins of wine and drove them towards the treasury; and then as he passed the sentinels he contrived to secretly loosen the necks of three of the skins, so that the wine poured out in great quantities into the road. Whilst this was going on he beat his head and filled the air with his cries, as if he knew not to which mule to run first. The sentinels, heartily laughing at the accident, ran into the road with pitchers and pails, to catch up some of the wine for themselves. Then he reviled them fiercely; but the sentinels began to soothe him, and at last he pretended to be pacified and began to drink with them. A fresh skin was soon opened, which was duly followed by others, and, in short, the sentinels drank their fill, until, overpowered by the wine, they one and all fell asleep on the spot in a state of complete drunkenness. Then, as the night by this time was far advanced, the pretended wine-dealer shaved the right cheeks of the sentinels by way of derision, and placing the dead body of his brother upon

the back of one of his mules, he carried it triumphantly home to his mother.

Tidings of this exploit soon reached the king, and he flew into a greater rage than ever. He resolved to shrink from no means by which he could find out the robber of his gold and the contriver of such extraordinary artifices. Now his daughter was the most beautiful maiden in all Egypt, and the whole nation had seen and admired her surpassing loveliness. He therefore ordered the princess to sit in a room in the palace which opened upon the public street, and to give a kiss to any man who would confess to her the most daring and crafty action which he had ever committed; and he likewise directed her to seize any one who should acknowledge that he had robbed the treasury, or carried off the dead body of the thief. The princess promised to obey, and guards were placed ready to pounce upon any man whom she might seize. The next day the people came thronging in, and the young man amongst the rest. The latter had, however, provided himself with a false arm, and carried it under his cloak. When his turn came, he approached the princess, and said, "The most daring thing I ever did was to cut off my brother's head; and the most crafty thing I ever did was to make the sentinels drunk and carry off his body." He then drew near to kiss her; upon which she cried out, and would have grasped him by the arm; but he gave the false arm into her hand, and at once made his escape, leaving her in the utmost amazement that a man should flee away and leave his arm behind him with so little trouble.

The king's rage against the criminal was now lost in his admiration at the wisdom and daring of the man. He ordered it to be proclaimed throughout every city, that if the thief would give himself up, he should not only receive a free pardon, but likewise a large reward. Accordingly the young man proceeded to the royal palace,

and make himself known to the king; and Rhampsinitus at once took him into his favour, and subsequently gave him the beautiful princess for a wife, esteeming the Egyptians to be the wisest of all men, but his new son-in-law to be the wisest of Egyptians.

Other stories not so wildly romantic, but partaking more of a supernatural character, were likewise told of Rhampsinitus. Thus it was said that, whilst still alive, he descended into the realms of departed spirits, and there played at dice with Isis, who performed the same part in the Egyptian mythology as the Chthonian Demeter, to whom we have already alluded. He was said to have sometimes won and sometimes lost in his ghostly gambling; but, on his return to the surface of the earth, to have brought with him a napkin of gold, which he had received from the goddess as a present. The Egyptians in the time of Herodotus still observed a festival which the priests of Pthah said was in commemoration of this descent of Rhampsinitus into Hades. Whether it was so or not, Herodotus could not exactly tell; all that he knew was, that on a certain day the priests placed a cloak upon one of their number, and bandaged his eyes with a scarf; and then they conducted him to the road which led to the temple of Isis, and there left him. They likewise said that the blindfolded priest was led by two wolves to the temple itself, which was ten miles and a half from Memphis, and afterwards brought back again; but Herodotus, like any other intelligent Greek of his generation, left the story for others to believe.

The foregoing legends must be regarded as temple stories of those good kings who had been so much devoted to the gods as to beautify and enlarge the great metropolitan temple of Pthah. We have now to communicate to the reader those stories which the priests told Herodotus concerning those three wicked kings—Cheops, Chephren, and Mycerinus,—who, instead of building

temples, took to building pyramids. First of all, however, we must remark, that though we have, in accordance with the order in which the priests of Pthah told their stories to Herodotus, placed the legends of the temple kings before those of the pyramid kings, yet this arrangement is in reality opposed to true chronology. Sesostris, and probably the other temple kings, belonged to the nineteenth and subsequent dynasties, who reigned in the days of Moses, Joshua, and the Judges, and after the expulsion of the Shepherd kings. The pyramid-building kings, however, belonged to the fourth dynasty, who reigned in the primeval times of Nimrod and Asshur, before the invasion of the Shepherds, and before even Abraham was called out of the land of the Chaldees. The priests of Pthah, in order to exaggerate the antiquity and glory of their temple, placed its builders many centuries too early; and, in order to depreciate the pyramids, placed the pyramid-builders many centuries too late. Moreover, as the Shepherd kings were much hated by the Egyptians, they declared that the pyramids had been built by the Shepherds.

Herodotus could learn but very little about the Shepherds, and we cannot tell the reader much more. It seems, however, that about the times of the patriarchs Abraham and Joseph, B. C. 1900—1700, the Delta was overrun by a nomade Arab horde, who soon established a supremacy under the name of Hyksos, or Shepherd kings.* They were included in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth dynasties of Manetho. The

* The Shepherd kings were probably in possession of the country in the time of Abraham's visit, but were driven out some time before the administration of Joseph; for we find that Abraham, a possessor of flocks and herds, was treated with the utmost consideration by the reigning Pharaoh, whilst in the time of Joseph shepherds were an abomination to the Egyptians. Thus the pyramids must have been built prior to the year 1900 B. C., and the temple of Pthah after that date.

people are represented on the monuments as having red hair and blue eyes, and as being loosely clothed in undressed hides. After their expulsion they appear to have retired to Palestine, where they may have become the ancestors of the Philistines, and perhaps of other Canaanite races. The intense hatred which the Egyptians ever after exhibited against the Hyksos is plainly visible from many representations on the monuments. A number of painted papyrus sandals have also been preserved, in which one of the hated race has been represented on the interior sole, so that the Egyptian wearer might stamp upon his enemies every time he put on his sandals.

But to return to the pyramid kings. The pyramids were built upon a rocky platform, commencing about ten or twelve miles to the north-west of Memphis, but stretching to a considerable distance towards the north-west. Of these the first and largest was called the Great Pyramid of Cheops. The second was the next in size, and was known as the Pyramid of Chephren. The third was still smaller, and was called the Pyramid of Mycerinus. A little to the south-east of the Great Pyramid were three very small pyramids, of which the central one was said to have been built by the daughter of Cheops. Very much farther to the south was a brick pyramid, said to have been built by Asychis, who succeeded Mycerinus on the throne. Numerous other pyramids were also seen by Herodotus, and may still be seen by the modern pilgrim; but, to tell the truth, they possessed but few points of interest to our traveller, as he could not learn any historical legends connected with their building.

The story told by the priests ran somewhat as follows. "In ancient times justice was properly administered throughout the country, and all Egypt was in a state of high prosperity. Cheops, however, who came to the throne after the death of Rhampsinitus, plunged into every kind of wickedness. He shut up all the temples, forbade the

Egyptians to offer sacrifice, and at last ordered all the people to work for himself like so many slaves. Some he appointed to hew stones out of the Arabian mountains, and drag them to the banks of the Nile; others were stationed to receive the same in boats, and transport them along a paved causeway to the rocky platform on which the pyramid was to be built. In this service a hundred thousand men were employed at a time, a fresh party relieving the other every three months. Thirty years were occupied upon the undertaking, of which ten years were wholly taken up in laying down the causeway between the bank of the Nile and the site of the pyramid, and in forming some subterranean chambers in the rocky platform. The remaining twenty years were spent in the erection of the pyramid."

The causeway here mentioned, and of which some remains are still to be seen, appears to have been an inclined plane, rising from the level below to that of the rock on which the pyramid was to stand. It was nearly three-quarters of a mile long, and sixty feet wide, and was constructed of polished stone, beautifully carved all over with figures of animals. The pyramid of Cheops, on which twenty years' labour was expended, is about a hundred feet higher than St. Paul's, and occupies a square of more than thirteen English statute acres. The internal masses consisted of huge blocks hewn out of the Libyan range, upon which the pyramids are built; but the outside, in the time of Herodotus, was coated over with a beautifully polished compact limestone, brought from the Arabian quarries. The internal chambers and passages were likewise lined with the same highly polished casing-stones. The blocks were raised from one stage to the other by means of machines made of short pieces of wood. The priests told Herodotus that Cheops was buried in a subterranean vault underneath the pyramid; and that the vault itself was constructed in a kind of island, being surrounded by an artificial channel of water, conducted thither from

the River Nile. Of the three little pyramids near, the middle one was said to have been built by the daughter of Cheops.

Cheops, the builder of the Great Pyramid, reigned for a period of fifty years, and was then succeeded by his brother Chephren. The new king reigned fifty-six years, during which he followed the same policy and practices as Cheops, namely, shutting up the temples, ruling his subjects unjustly, and building a pyramid. The pyramid of Chephren, however, was forty feet lower than the pyramid of Cheops, and contained no subterranean chambers; but it presented a more brilliant appearance, for the upper courses were cased with polished limestone from the Arabian mountains; whilst the lowest course was coated with beautifully polished red granite from the first cataract.

Mycerinus, the son of Cheops, succeeded to the throne after his uncle Chephren. He opened the temples, and permitted the people to sacrifice to the gods, and return to their several employments. He was also famous for the justness of his judgments, and if any man complained of his decision, he would make him a present out of his own treasury in order to pacify him. This beneficent king, however, was visited by great misfortunes. First of all he lost his daughter, who was his only child, and whom he had dearly loved. Wishing to bury her in a more costly manner than usual, he caused a hollow wooden image of a cow to be made, and then having covered it with gold, he placed the body of his deceased daughter within it. This cow was not interred in the ground, but was exposed to view in a richly furnished chamber of the royal palace of the Pharaohs at Sais. Herodotus saw it during his stay in Sais. The cow was a little larger than the natural size, and was in a kneeling position. The head and neck were covered with thick gold, and a golden sun was placed between its horns. All other parts were covered with a purple cloth. Aro-

matics were kept continually burning before it every day, and throughout every night a lamp was kept constantly burning in the chamber. When the princess was dying she was said to have entreated her father Mycerinus to permit her to see the sun once every year. Accordingly every year the cow was carried out of the chamber into the open daylight, and on that occasion the Egyptians beat themselves in honour of Osiris.

After the loss of his daughter a second calamity befel Mycerinus. An oracle was dispatched to him from the temple of Leto in the city of Buto, saying that he had only six years longer to live, and that he would die in the seventh. Mycerinus thought this treatment very hard, and sent a reproachful message to the goddess. He complained that his father Cheops and his uncle Chephren, who had shut up the temples, and both neglected the gods and oppressed their subjects, had been each permitted to live to a great age; whereas he who had been so religious was condemned to an early death. The oracle replied to this complaint by saying that it was this very piety which had shortened his life, for it was needful that Egypt should be afflicted for 150 years; but that whilst his two predecessors had understood this necessity, he himself had not done so, and had therefore acted contrary to the will of the gods. When Mycerinus thus saw that sentence was fairly pronounced against him, he ordered an immense number of lamps to be made, and began to turn night into day, drinking and revelling without ceasing both day and night. By this artifice he hoped to convict the oracle of falsehood; as, by turning the nights into days, he would live twelve years instead of six. Mycerinus left behind him a pyramid, which was still less than that of Chephren, and was cased half-way up with polished red granite from the first cataract.

Such were the three great pyramids and the stories told of their builders. In the eyes of Herodotus the pyra-

mids appeared to be solid quadrangular masses, covering an immense area, and presenting on each of their four sides a beautifully polished and perfectly even surface, gradually narrowing until it terminated on the summit. During the twenty-three centuries which have passed away since he visited Egypt, the exterior polished casing-stones have been torn away, leaving the internal masses all exposed; and the sepulchral chambers have been entered and plundered by the caliphs. On the other hand, enterprising travellers have penetrated the long passages leading into interior chambers; and recent discoveries have enabled us almost to solve the great problem connected with their structure. They were especially erected as sepulchres for kings. The inclined passages leading into the interior were for the conveyance of the sarcophagi; the blocks which filled up the entrance were intended to prevent disinterment and violation. At the commencement of each reign the rock chamber destined for the monarch's grave was excavated, and one course of masonry erected above it. If the king died in the first year of his reign, a casing was put upon it and a pyramid formed; but if the king did not die, another course of stone was added above, and two of the same height and thickness on each side. Thus, in process of time, the building assumed the form of a series of regular steps, which, on the death of a monarch, were cased over with polished limestone or granite. The different sizes of the pyramids is therefore to be accounted for by the difference in the duration of the several reigns; and the length of a reign might be ascertained, if it were possible to learn the number of courses over the internal rock chamber in which the monarch himself was deposited.

Upon the pyramid of Cheops was an inscription in Egyptian characters, which was duly interpreted to Herodotus, but which, of course, has now disappeared with the casing-stones. It showed how much had been expended in radishes, garlic, and onions for the workmen;

and the interpreter who read it to Herodotus told him that the whole amounted to 1600 talents of silver. "If this be really true," thought our traveller, as he summed it up in his own mind, "how much more must have been expended in iron tools, bread, and clothes for the labourers?"

We have already said that the pyramid kings have been identified with some of those belonging to the old fourth dynasty of Manetho; and a recent discovery has confirmed this opinion. In a chamber underneath the Pyramid of Mycerinus Colonel Vyse found the fragments of the top of a mummy-case inscribed with hieroglyphics; and close by it was a skeleton enveloped in a mummy-cloth, just in the state in which it had been evidently left by some visitors who had removed it from the sarcophagus, which also was still lying in a lower chamber. The hieroglyphics upon the lid of the mummy-case have since been translated by Mr. Birch as follows:—

"Osirian, King Menkahre of eternal life, engendered of the Heaven, child of Netpe . . . . who extends thy mother.

"Netpe over thee, may she watch thy abode in Heaven, revealing thee to the God (chastiser) of thy impure enemies, King Menkahre living for ever."

Menkahre was thus the builder of the third pyramid, and therefore the Mycerinus named to Herodotus; and we can no longer doubt but that he is identical with the Mencheres of the fourth dynasty of Manetho, who reigned in primeval and patriarchal times. Herodotus, who visited Egypt some ten years before the administration of Nehemiah at Jerusalem, heard the story of his reign, and gazed upon his pyramidal tomb. The modern reader may now enter the mummy-room of the British Museum, and there, amid embalmed cats and painted coffins, and other relics of a bygone world, he will see on a plain shelf on his right hand all that remains of the bones and coffin of Menkahre; a monarch who reigned long ere the siege of

Troy, and probably long before the little ark of Moses was set adrift upon the ancient Nile.

The story of another pyramid-builder was likewise told to Herodotus; but his pyramid was made of brick, and lay far away to the south, amongst those which are now called the Pyramids of Dashoor. The name of the king was Asychis, and he was said to have succeeded Mycerinus or Menkahre. In his reign there was said to be a great want of money, and it was established by law that any man might pledge the embalmed body of his father and obtain money on it. Under these circumstances, the man who lent the money was to have full power over the sepulchre of the man who borrowed it; and neither the borrower nor any of his family could be buried in any sepulchre until the money was repaid. Asychis, as we said before, built a pyramid of bricks; and he was so proud of it, that he had the following inscription carved on it:—

"Despise me not because of the pyramids of stone; for I excel them as much as Zeus excels the other gods. For by plunging a pole into a lake, and collecting the mud which hung to the pole, men made bricks and erected me."

We have now to relate all that the priests told Herodotus concerning the kings of the Old Testament period; but, in order to do this clearly, it will be necessary for us to commence a fresh chapter.

CHAP. XXXV.

HISTORY OF EGYPT, ANTE 455 B.C.

HISTORY OF THE KINGS OF EGYPT CONNECTED WITH THE KINGS OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL. — SHISHAK. — STORY OF SABACON OF THE DYNASTY OF TIRHAKA. — PRIEST-KING SETHON. — INVASION OF SENNACHERIB. — CONNEXIONS WITH THE COURT OF HEZEKIAH. — STORY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF TWELVE KINGS. — PSAMMITICHUS. — PHARAOH-NECHO. — CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF AFRICA. — DEFEAT AND DEATH OF KING JOSIAH. — NECHO DEFEATED BY NEBUCHADNEZZAR. — REIGN OF APRIES, THE PHARAOH-HOPHRA OF SCRIPTURE. — DEPOSED BY AMASIS. — ANECDOTES OF THE MERRY REIGN OF AMASIS. — TRADITIONARY ACCOUNTS OF THE CAUSES OF THE PERSIAN INVASION. — STORY OF PHANES. — CONQUEST OF EGYPT BY CAMBYSES. — PATHETIC STORY. — MAD ACTS OF CAMBYSES. — FAILURE OF HIS THREE EXPEDITIONS. — APPEARANCE OF APIS. — DEATH OF CAMBYSES. — AFTER HISTORY OF EGYPT.

We have already seen that the priests at Memphis made a great chronological error in placing the kings of the nineteenth dynasty who had beautified and enlarged the great temple of Pthah, before the primeval kings of the fourth dynasty who erected the three great pyramids of Gizeh. When, therefore, they began to relate to Herodotus their traditions of the later kings, who were contemporary with the later kings of Israel and Judah, they leaped over a chasm of at least a thousand years, viz. from B. C. 1900 to B. C. 900. It is true that about the latter end of this period, namely, about B. C. 975, Shishak, king of Egypt, invaded Judah in the reign of Rehoboam, son of Solomon; and this king has been identified with the monarch named Sheshonk on the monuments and Sesonchis in the lists of Manetho. But it is evident from the foregoing stories that he was totally unknown to the sacerdotal informants of Herodotus. Thus almost the very next kings mentioned

by the priests of Memphis after the pyramid builders, who flourished in patriarchal times, were those who reigned contemporary with Hezekiah and his successors.

It would seem that about the eighth century B.C. a king named Anysis, who was blind, reigned over the Delta. An Ethiopian conqueror, however, named Sabacon, of the dynasty of Tirhakah, marched from the hot and distant regions of the south northwards along the valley of the Nile, and at last took Memphis and overthrew the Egyptian monarchy. According to the statements of the Memphian priests, Sabacon abdicated after reigning fifty years, and Anysis was restored to his throne. The story which they told Herodotus concerning the causes which led to the retreat of the Ethiopian Sabacon is worth relating. They said that he had a dream, in which a man appeared to him and advised him to assemble all the Egyptian priests and put them to death by cutting each of them in two down the middle. When he awoke he began to ruminate upon the dream and upon the very radical measure of ecclesiastical reform suggested by the supernatural visitant. He likewise remembered that the Ethiopian oracles, which he had consulted before leaving his native country, had foretold that he was fated to reign over Egypt for fifty years; and at the same time it flashed across his mind that fifty years had actually expired since he had seized the Egyptian sovereignty. Accordingly, he decided that the dream was sent to tempt him to commit some act of impiety which should bring upon himself evil from gods or men; and he therefore determined not only to disobey the vision, but to abdicate the throne of Egypt and return to Ethiopia.

Sethon, a priest of Pthah, succeeded to the kingdom on the death of Anysis, and reigned from B.C. 715 to 671; he was an ally of Tirhakah the Ethiopian, and a contemporary of Hezekiah and Manasseh. The Memphian priests said that Sethon despised the military caste and confiscated their estates; and that shortly afterwards Sennacherib, king of

Assyria, entered Egypt with a large army, but the Egyptian warriors refused to assist their king in repelling the invaders. In this extremity the priest-king Sethon entered the great temple of Pthah, and penetrating into the inner cella, bewailed before the image of the deity the calamities which were threatening him. Sleep, however, fell upon him in the midst of his lamentations, and the god appeared to him in a vision, and assured him of divine assistance against Sennacherib. Cheered by this vision, he hastily formed an army of the trading castes and marched against the invaders; but meantime an immense multitude of field-mice had eaten up the bow-strings, quivers, and shield-handles in the invading army, so that he obtained a complete victory over Sennacherib. The stone statue erected to commemorate this event is described in the previous chapter.

Sethon was undoubtedly the Pharaoh to whom the nobles of Judah sent camels and asses laden with treasure, in opposition to the remonstrances of Isaiah, but in the hope that Sethon would despatch a force of cavalry and chariots to assist Hezekiah against Sennacherib. Sethon, as we have seen, was involved in disputes with his military, but he knew that the reduction of Judæa by Sennacherib was only a preliminary to the Assyrian invasion of Egypt. He therefore sent despatches to his ally, Tirhakah, the king of Ethiopia, who immediately set off with a large army to repel Sennacherib. Meantime, as we learn from Holy Writ, Sennacherib was besieging the town of Libnah; but hearing of the approach of the Ethiopian, he raised the siege of Libnah and prepared to meet his new antagonist. His career, however, was nearly closed. Before leaving Libnah he sent a boastful letter to Hezekiah, defying the God of Israel, and threatening destruction on his return; but his message of defiance was met by a splendid piece of inspired eloquence from Isaiah, which we still read with interest and admira-

tion.* "And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses."†

We must now return to the information vouchsafed by the priests of Memphis. After the death of Sethon, the Egyptians became free, but as they were never able to live without a king, a government of twelve kings was established, which may be called a Dodecarchy. The twelve kings divided Egypt into twelve districts amongst themselves, and contracted intermarriages; and they agreed not to attempt to subvert one another, but to maintain the strictest friendship. These regulations they upheld, because an oracle had foretold "that whoever among them should offer a libation in the temple of Pthah from a brazen bowl, should be king of all Egypt." Now it chanced that on one festival, the twelve kings were sacrificing in this great temple, and were about to offer a libation on the last day, when the high-priest, by some mistake, brought out eleven instead of twelve golden bowls for the purpose. Upon this the twelfth king, seeing that there was no bowl for him, and without in the least remembering the oracle, took the brazen helmet off his head, and held it out and made the libation. The eleven immediately recollected the oracle, and would have put the offending king, whose name was Psammitichus, to immediate death; but discovering, upon examination, that he had acted from no premeditated design, they merely banished him to the marshes of the Delta. Psammitichus, was compelled to go into exile; but he considered himself to have been deeply injured by the eleven, and determined to take revenge. He sent to consult the celebrated oracle of Leto, in the city of Buto, and received

* 2 Kings, xix. 21—34. † 2 Kings, xix. 35.

for answer that "vengeance would come from the sea when men of brass should appear." This event of course seemed incredible; but not long afterwards, some Ionian and Carians, who had sailed from the coast of Asia Minor for the purposes of piracy, were compelled by stress of weather to bear away to Egypt; and when they had disembarked, and were to be seen walking on the shore in their brazen armour, an Egyptian ran away to Psammitichus, and told him that men of brass had risen from the sea, and were ravaging the plains. The dethroned king saw at once that the oracle was accomplished, and by a profusion of promises he persuaded the Ionians and Carians to join him; and then, by their assistance, he defeated the eleven kings, and became the sole and undisputed sovereign of all Egypt.

Psammitichus reigned altogether fifty-four years,—viz., from B.C. 671 to 617. He was principally famous for having been the first to permit foreigners, like the Ionians and Carians, to settle in the Egyptian territory. He was succeeded by his son Necho—the Pharaoh-Necho of Scripture, who reigned from B.C. 617 to 601. According to the Memphian priests, Necho commenced the canal from the Nile to the Red Sea, which was subsequently completed by Darius the Persian, Necho having been stopped by an oracle, which assured him that he was only working for a barbarian. Necho next turned his attention to foreign conquest. He built war-ships both on the Mediterranean and on the Red Sea; and it was he who sent some Phœnicians to attempt the circumnavigation of the African continent, or, as it was anciently called, the continent of Libya. Herodotus inquired very eagerly and particularly about this expedition, but the priests knew very little about it. "The Phœnicians," they said, "had set out from the Red Sea, and navigated the Southern Sea. When autumn came they sowed the land at whatever part of Libya they might happen to be

sailing; then, having reaped the corn, they put to sea again. Two years thus passed away. At length, in the third year of their voyage, having sailed through the Pillars of Hercules*, they reached Egypt, and declared that, as they sailed round Libya, they had the sun on their right hand." Herodotus knew not what to make of this story, especially of the relation of the Phœnicians that after sailing a certain distance towards the south, they had the sun on their right hand,—that is, on the north of their vessels. This last fact, which is easily understood by any one who knows the position and shape of the earth, and which has been experienced by every one who has crossed the equatorial line, was indeed finally rejected by our sage traveller, who thought that other people might believe it if they liked, but that he was by no means such a fool.

The remainder of the life of Necho is well known to the reader of Scripture. Whilst Egypt had been consolidating her strength by introducing Greek tactics into her army, and constructing fleets in the Mediterranean and Red Sea, the great Assyrian empire had rapidly declined; and Necho chose this critical period for invading her empire. He directed his march towards Carchemish, an important post on the river Euphrates, and followed the usual route, along the sea-coast of Palestine, northward. It should be remembered that, some time previously, the ten tribes of Israel had been carried away into Assyrian captivity, but the pious king Josiah was reigning over the kingdom of Judah. He had probably been permitted to retain his own kingdom of Judah on condition of defending the Assyrian frontier against Egypt; and accordingly he now posted his forces in the celebrated plain of Esdraelon or Jezreel, to intercept Necho. The latter sent messengers to advise him to desist from interfering, but in vain. A battle ensued,

* *i. e.*, Straits of Gibraltar.

and Josiah, who went out in disguise, was slain by the Egyptian archers in the valley of Megiddo. "And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: all the singing men and singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day."* Josiah was succeeded on the throne of Judah by his son Jehoahaz or Shallum (B. C. 610). Meantime, Necho pursued his course to the Euphrates, and after three months returned victorious, having captured Carchemish, and defeated the Assyrians. He now appears to have acted as lord paramount of Judah. He put Jehoahaz in bonds at Riblah in Hamath in Syria, and condemned the land of Judah to pay him a hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold. He then went to Jerusalem and placed Eliakim, another son of Josiah, on the throne, in the room of Jehoahaz, and changed his name to Jehoiakim; and he afterwards returned to Egypt, carrying Jehoahaz with him as a hostage. During the first three years of Jehoiakim's reign, Necho continued to push his conquests eastward towards the Euphrates, until his progress was stopped by the Chaldee-Babylonian power. The celebrated Nebuchadnezzar obtained a decisive victory over Necho at Carchemish, the same spot where Necho had formerly been so successful against Assyria; and within a year of his victory at Carchemish, Nebuchadnezzar had swept off every vestige of Egyptian power in Syria, and presented his irresistible armies on the eastern side of Palestine. And Judah was carried away captive out of his own land, B. C. 588.

But to return to the priests of Memphis. They merely told Herodotus that Necho had defeated the Syrians at Magdolus and taken the large city of Jerusalem; and that he had subsequently dedicated to Apollo the garments which he had worn in both actions, and sent them to the sanctuary of the Branchidæ in Miletus.†

* 2 Chron. xxxv. 25.

† See Vol. I. p. 52.

Necho died B.C. 601, and was succeeded by his son Psammis, of whom nothing was related worth repeating. Apries, the Pharaoh-Hophra of Scripture, succeeded B.C. 595. He was the king in whose reign Judah was carried away into Babylonian captivity. He had formed an alliance with Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, and marched to his assistance; but the approach of Nebuchadnezzar with a large army induced him to return to Egypt.

The priests of Memphis said that Apries had gained great victories by sea against the Tyrians and Sidonians, and had prospered exceedingly for the space of twenty-five years. At the expiration of that time, however, he went to war with the Greek colonists at Cyrene, and having sent a large army against them, met with a signal defeat. The Egyptians then revolted, fully believing that Apries had designedly sent his army to certain ruin, in order that he might tyrannise over the country with greater security. Apries sent Amasis, a plausible, jocular man, to appease the rebels by persuasion; but whilst Amasis was using his utmost efforts to induce them to throw down their arms, one of the revolutionary party crowned him with a helmet, and declared that he crowned him as the new king of Egypt. Amasis had accepted the dignity, and his nomination was at once responded to by all the revolters. Apries soon heard the news, and sent an officer to bring Amasis alive; but when the officer reached the revolutionary army and summoned Amasis, the latter told him "that he was already preparing to go to Apries, and that Apries should have no cause of complaint, for he would not only come himself, but would bring others with him." The officer returned to inform Apries of the formidable preparations which were in progress; but Apries was so blindly enraged at not seeing Amasis brought before him as a prisoner, that he ordered the ears and nose of the officer to be immediately cut off. This act of

tyranny proved fatal to the royal cause. The Egyptians who had hitherto remained attached to Apries now threw off their allegiance and joined the rebels. Apries assembled an army of Greek mercenaries, but was overpowered by the hosts who fought on the side of Amasis, and carried as a prisoner to his own royal city of Sais. Amasis at first maintained him in the royal palace, and treated him with the utmost kindness; but the Egyptians complained of his injustice in preserving the life of the greatest enemy to the nation and the throne, and accordingly Apries was strangled, but his body was buried in the royal sepulchre.

Amasis reigned from B.C. 570 to 526. He was the wisest and most liberal of all the Egyptian kings, but at the same time the merriest Pharaoh that ever sat upon the throne. At first the higher castes despised him, because of his humble origin; but he succeeded in conciliating them all. Amongst his treasures was a golden foot-pan, in which both he himself and all his guests were accustomed to wash their feet. This foot-pan he melted down into the statue of a god, and placed it in the principal street in Sais; and all the Egyptians in the city at once flocked to the image and worshipped it with the utmost reverence. He then told them that the god which they were worshipping had been previously a foot-pan, in the same way that he, their king, had been previously a private person; and that he therefore required them to respect him in spite of his humble origin, in the same way that they had worshipped the image in spite of its having been only a foot-pan.

Amasis had been dead exactly seventy years at the time Herodotus visited Egypt, and he had been so much beloved by his subjects that his sayings and doings were still in everybody's mouth. Other persons, therefore, besides the priests of Pthah, imparted to our traveller a considerable amount of information concerning this prince and his successor.

The manner of life adopted by Amasis was the following. He rose early in the morning, and devoted himself assiduously to the despatch of business until about noon; but the remainder of the day he spent in drinking and jesting with congenial companions. The jests and laughter that filled the old palace of the Pharaohs must have grievously scandalised the shades of any of the priest-kings who might have haunted the ancient halls. The personal friends of Amasis were, indeed, much offended at his unkingly conviviality, and seriously admonished him. "O king!" they said, "you make yourself too common, and do not control yourself properly. It would better become you to sit on a venerable throne, and pass the day in transacting business; thus the Egyptians would know that they are governed by a great man, and would speak much better of you." To this lecture Amasis gravely replied: "Those who have bows, when they want to use them, bend them, but when they have done using them, they unbend them; for if the bow was kept always bent it would break, and the archer could no longer use it. Now such is the condition of man. If he incessantly attends to serious business, and never gives any moments to pleasure, he will gradually become mad or stupid. I, being well aware of this circumstance, divide my time between business and pleasure."

Amasis was said to have been always fond of drinking and jesting, and disinclined to serious business; consequently, when he was only a private person, his means would frequently fail him, and he would even pilfer in order to gratify his favourite vice. Persons would then charge him with the theft, and on his denying it would take him to one or other of the oracles, according to the city he might happen to be in, and the oracle would sometimes convict him, and perhaps quite as frequently acquit him. When, therefore, he came to the throne he paid the highest respect to every oracle which had con-

victed him of a theft, considering that it delivered true responses, and was really connected with a god. Those oracles, however, which had acquitted him he regarded as having given lying responses, and therefore never contributed to their temples, nor frequented them, nor offered sacrifices to them, nor considered them to be of any authority whatever.

It was Amasis, who enacted the very wise law that once a year every Egyptian should declare to the magistrate of his district how he maintained himself, and if he failed to do this, or did not prove that he lived by honest means, he was put to death as a useless member of society. This king was also very fond of the Greeks, and it was he who gave them the city of Naucratis to dwell in; and to such as only wished to trade by sea, he granted places where they might have altars and temples to their own gods. He likewise married a Greek wife named Ladice, who was a native of Cyrene. He dedicated numerous offerings in Greece, namely, a gilded statue of the goddess Athena, and a painted portrait of himself in the temple of Athena at Cyrene; two stone statues and a curious linen corselet in the temple of Athena at Lindus, in the island of Rhodes; and two images of himself carved in wood in the great and magnificent temple of Hera in the island of Samos, which we have already described. Moreover, when a collection was being made for rebuilding the temple of Delphi, which had been burnt down, Amasis sent a thousand talents of alum as his contribution towards the restoration.

During the reign of Amasis, Egypt enjoyed a prosperous peace; but in spite of this apparent tranquillity, those ancient politicians who had studied the great Eastern question might have seen that the national independence was doomed. In a future chapter we shall have occasion to review the early history of the East at considerable length; but it will be necessary in the present to briefly

glance at the progress of events which led to the overthrow of the monarchy of the Pharaohs.

After the final destruction of the great Assyrian empire by the taking of Nineveh (B. C. 606), the empire of Asia fell into the hands of three great powers, namely, the Medes, the Babylonians, and the Lydians. The Medes became the ruling power between the rivers Tigris and Indus, the Babylonians between the river Tigris and the Mediterranean and river Halys, and the Lydians in Asia Minor between the river Halys and the Ægean.* This state of things scarcely lasted half a century after the taking of Nineveh. The hardy mountaineers of Persia rushed from their native fastnesses under the leadership of Cyrus, the Kai Khosru of Oriental romance; within thirty years they had overturned the three empires of Medes, Babylonians, and Lydians; but Cyrus at last fell (B. C. 530.) in a desperate war with the hordes of Independent Tartary.

Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, succeeded his father, and aspired to the conquest of Egypt. The cause of the war was variously related, both by the Persians and the Egyptians. It was said by the Persians that Cyrus, when he was alive, had sent a friendly message to Amasis to request that the Egyptian king would send him the best oculist in Egypt; for, as we have already seen, every medical practitioner in Egypt confined himself to the study of only one part of the body; and thus, of course, that country produced the best dentists, the best aurists, and the best oculists in the ancient world. Amasis at once selected the best oculist in Egypt, and tore him away from his wife and children and sent him as a present to the great Asiatic hero. When Cambyses ascended the throne, the physician obtained his revenge, for he persuaded the new king to send to Egypt and demand the

* Geog. of Herod., pp. 201, 202. and *note*.

daughter of Amasis, thinking that Amasis would either endure great affliction in complying, or incur the hatred of Cambyses by refusing.

Amasis, however, had too much ready wit not to avoid the danger. He knew that if he sent his daughter to the Persian court, Cambyses would not make her his wife, but only his slave; and at the same time he was greatly alarmed at the growing power of the Persian empire, and fearful of arousing its enmity. Now, the daughter of king Apries was still living, and was the only survivor of the royal family. Her name was Nitetis, and she was very tall and beautiful. Amasis arrayed this damsel in a splendid attire of cloth of gold, and sent her to Persia as his own daughter. Cambyses, on seeing her, addressed her in her father's name, upon which she said to him, "O king, Amasis has imposed upon you by sending me in this rich attire as his own daughter, whereas I am the daughter of King Apries, who was the master of Amasis until that wicked servant incited the Egyptians to revolt, and then put my father to death." This address and accusation was said to have enraged Cambyses, and determined him on invading Egypt.

The Egyptians, however, told a different story. They said that it was Cyrus, and not Cambyses, who sent for the daughter of Amasis, and that Cambyses was in reality the son of Cyrus and Nitetis. This, however, was a perversion of the truth, for the sake of asserting the half Egyptian parentage of Cambyses, and thus gratifying the national pride. Such a son could never have succeeded to the Persian throne whilst more legitimate princes were living; and Cambyses was not the son of Nitetis, but of Cassandane, a daughter of the royal house of the Achæmenids.

Another story was also told which is simply interesting as illustrative of the court gossip of the time. A certain Persian lady was visiting the princesses in the royal

harem, and, amongst others, entered the apartments of Cassandane, the wife of Cyrus. There she saw Cassandane, surrounded by her children, who were tall, and exceedingly handsome; and she could not help praising them highly, for she was very much struck by them. Cassandane, however, said, "Though I am the mother of so fine a family, yet Cyrus neglects me for the sake of the Egyptian stranger." Thus she spoke from her jealousy of Nitetis; but Cambyses, who was the eldest of her sons, said, "Because of that Egyptian, mother, when I am a man, and ascend the throne, I will turn all Egypt upside down." The prince at that time was not more than ten years of age, and all the ladies were astonished at his remark; but he bore the matter constantly in mind, and when he had succeeded to the kingdom he determined on invading Egypt.

The Persian invasion of Egypt was greatly accelerated by an incident which almost belonged to the history of Halicarnassus, and was, therefore, already well known to Herodotus. A native of Halicarnassus, named Phanes, had entered the Egyptian service, and soon made himself very useful to Amasis as a man able in counsel and valiant in war. Phanes, however, became offended at something or other, and got on board a vessel and made his escape from Egypt, intending to offer his services to Cambyses. Now Amasis knew that Phanes was one of the most useful officers in his service, and that he was moreover accurately acquainted with Egyptian affairs. He consequently saw that Phanes must be prevented at all hazards from deserting to the Persians; and he therefore sent trusty men to follow him up and bring him back. The men caught him; but Phanes contrived, by intoxicating them, to make his escape, and reached Cambyses just in time to give the Persian king most important advice as to the best route to be taken through the deserts of Northern Arabia towards the Egyptian frontier.

Meantime Amasis died, and was succeeded by his son Psammenitus (B.C. 526). Cambyses, profiting by the experience of Phanes, was enabled to lead a large army through the desert to the borders of Egypt, where he found Psammenitus encamped ready to receive him. The treason of Phanes had greatly exasperated the Egyptians, but especially had excited the anger of those foreign auxiliaries who, like himself, had entered the service of the Egyptian king. His sons had been unfortunately left behind in Egypt, and the auxiliaries, consisting of Greeks and Carians, placed a bowl midway between the two armies and slaughtered the children one by one over the bowl. A terrible battle ensued, in which, after a most obstinate struggle, the Persians gained the victory. The Egyptians fled to Memphis, and shut themselves up within the walls. Cambyses sent a vessel with a Persian herald on board to invite them to come to terms; but when they saw the ship entering Memphis they rushed from the walls, destroyed the vessel, and tore the crew to pieces limb by limb, and carried them into the citadel. After a long siege they were compelled to surrender, and Cyrene and the neighbouring Libyans immediately sent in their submission, and offered for the future to pay tribute to the Persian power.

A most pathetic story is connected with the overthrow of the Egyptian monarchy. On the tenth day after Cambyses had taken the Memphian citadel he determined to try the courage of the Egyptian king, who had been so suddenly dethroned after a short reign of six months. Accordingly, Psammenitus and many of the Egyptian nobles were insultingly seated at the entrance of Memphis. By the order of Cambyses, the daughter of Psammenitus, with many other virgins, was dressed in the habit of a slave, and sent with a pitcher to fetch water. The ladies passed by their fathers at the entrance of the city, loudly lamenting and weeping over their unhappy

fate. All the fathers excepting the king beheld the bitter humiliation of their daughters with cries and wailings. Psammenitus alone, when he saw and knew what was going on, only bent his eyes to the ground, and uttered not a single groan. The unhappy ladies were followed by the son of Psammenitus and 2000 other Egyptians of his own age, with halters about their necks and a bridle in their mouths. These were being led to execution, in revenge for the slaughter of the crew which had been massacred at Memphis; for it had been ordered that ten Egyptians should be put to death for each one that had been slain on that occasion. Psammenitus again bowed his head in silence, though he saw and knew that his son was being led to execution, and though all the Egyptians round him were filling the air with their cries and lamentations. At last one of the Egyptian king's old friends, a man advanced in years, and who had lost his all in the recent catastrophe, passed through the city gate begging alms of the soldiery. Psammenitus beheld the man, and at once broke silence, and, weeping bitterly, called his old comrade by name and smote his head with grief. The spies of Cambyses, who had observed what was going on, carried the news of this extraordinary behaviour to the ears of the Persian king; and Cambyses was so surprised that he at once sent a messenger to ask Psammenitus why he should have bewailed the distress of his comrade but yet should not have wept at the humiliation of his own daughter, or execution of his own son. Psammenitus replied, "Son of Cyrus, the calamities of my family are too great to be expressed by lamentations; but the griefs of my friend were worthy of tears, for he has fallen from abundance and prosperity and come to beggary on the threshold of old age." Cambyses was touched with pity at this reply, and gave immediate orders that Psammenitus should be brought into his presence and the son be re-

prieved. The reprieve, however, was despatched too late, for the son was already amongst the dead.

Thus was Egypt annexed to the great Persian empire. Psammenitus was treated with favour by Cambyses, and might perhaps have been entrusted with the government of his old kingdom; but he was discovered inciting the Egyptians to revolt, and consequently was put to death.

Cambyses proceeded from the city of Memphis to that of Sais, where he endeavoured to revenge himself upon Amasis, and exhibit his hatred against the idolatry of the Egyptians. He ordered the dead body of Amasis to be brought out of its sepulchre, and to be scourged and treated with every possible indignity; and as the body, being embalmed, could not be pulled to pieces, he ordered it to be burned. This last act was an outrage upon the popular belief of the Persians themselves, who considered fire to be a god, and who thought it a very impious deed to offer to the deity the dead body of a man. The Egyptians, on the other hand, held fire to be a living beast which devoured everything it seized, and only expired when glutted with food; and they were so opposed to the idea of giving a dead body to wild beasts that they even embalmed the corpse to prevent its being eaten by worms.

Cambyses next planned three several expeditions, namely, one against the Carthaginians, a second against the Ammonians, and a third against the Macrobian Ethiopians. The first against Carthage was frustrated by the Phœnicians, who refused to sail against their own colony; and as they formed the main strength of the Carthaginian fleet, Cambyses could not force them. The two others met with terrible disasters. The Ammonians inhabited the fertile oasis of Siwah, about twenty days' journey from Thebes, which contained the celebrated temple and oracle of Zeus Ammon. The Macrobian Ethiopians appear to have inhabited the country now called Upper Nubia. Cambyses accordingly marched

with an immense army to the great city of Thebes in Upper or Southern Egypt. Here he detached 50,000 men, with orders to reduce the Ammonians to slavery, and to burn the oracular temple of Zeus; whilst he himself proceeded with his main forces, but without proper provisions, up the valley of the Nile towards the region of Nubia. The expedition against the Ammonians marched for seven days' journey across the desert in the direction of Siwah, but was never heard of afterwards; and it was reported by the Ammonians that the whole 50,000 men had been attacked by a sand-storm and completely overwhelmed and buried beneath the sandy heaps. Meantime, Cambyses, at the head of his main forces, proceeded in a southerly direction towards the Ethiopians; but not having made adequate provision for the subsistence of his army, all his provisions were exhausted before he had marched a fifth of the way, and his troops were compelled to kill and eat the sumpter beasts. If, however, he had turned back at this point, he would have proved himself a wise man, but he persisted in advancing. For a long time the soldiers subsisted upon such herbs as they could gather from the arid soil; but when they reached the sands, even this poor food failed them, and at last they had recourse to the horrid expedient of casting lots and taking one man in ten and devouring him. This fearful cannibalism brought the infatuated monarch to his senses, and he abandoned his expedition against the Ethiopians and turned back to Thebes, and from thence proceeded to Memphis, after having lost a very large proportion of his army.

Scarcely had he reached Memphis when suddenly the Egyptians gave way to general and frantic rejoicings. Every man put on his richest apparel and kept festive holiday. Cambyses concluded these public rejoicings were on account of his own misfortunes, and summoned the magistrates of Memphis and demanded to know the

reason of this ill-timed festivity. They replied that Apis had appeared upon earth, and that it was the national custom to welcome his appearance with joy and revelry. Apis was a young bull in which Osiris was supposed to manifest himself at distant intervals. It was known by certain marks;—that is, if at any time a young bull was found with its hair perfectly black, but with a square white spot on the forehead, the figure of an eagle on its back, double hairs in its tail, and a beetle on its tongue, then it was declared by the priests to be Apis, and all Egypt rejoiced that Osiris should have again appeared on earth.

Cambyses, having heard this story from the magistrates, said that they were liars, and ordered them to be put to death. He next summoned the priests, and when they gave him the same answer, he ordered them to bring Apis before him. Apis was accordingly conducted by the priests into the royal presence; but directly Cambyses saw the calf, he took out his dagger to stab it in the belly, but, missing his aim, only wounded the animal in the thigh. He then fell into a fit of laughter, and exclaimed to the astonished priests, "Ye blockheads, are there such gods as these, made of flesh and blood, and sensible of steel? A calf is indeed a god worthy of the Egyptians. But you shall not mock me with impunity." So saying, he ordered the priests to be scourged, and commanded that every Egyptian found feasting should be immediately executed. Thus was ended the great festival of the Egyptians. Apis died soon afterwards, and was secretly buried by the priests.

Of course such conduct was considered to be a sure evidence of madness both by Greeks and Egyptians. Moreover, Cambyses opened the ancient sepulchres at Memphis, and examined the dead bodies; and he entered the cella of the temple of Pthah and derided the sacred image. Not long afterwards, however, news of a very formidable revolt recalled him to Persia; but he died on his way back

from an accidental wound which he received in his thigh, —in the same spot, as the Egyptian priests loved to tell, as that in which he had inflicted the wound upon their god Apis.

The history of Egypt, from its conquest by Cambyses to the time of Herodotus' visit, may be told in a few words. It continued to be a satrapy of the Persian empire until the year B. C. 486, four years after the battle of Marathon, when it revolted against Darius, son of Hystaspes. Xerxes, the son and successor of Darius, re-subdued the country in the year B. C. 484, and gave the government of the satrapy to his brother Achæmenes. In B. C. 460, Inarus the Lybian revolted against this Achæmenes and slew him; and, assisted by the Athenians, was enabled to hold out for six years, but was at last subdued by the Persian general Megabyzus in the year B. C. 455, whilst Herodotus was residing in the Delta.

CHAP. XXXVI.

UPPER EGYPT, B. C. 454.

VOYAGE UP THE NILE TO THEBES.—EGYPTIAN RIVER CRAFT.—LAKE MŒRIS.—THE LABYRINTH.—PRESENT REMAINS OF THE LABYRINTH.—IMPOSING APPEARANCE OF THEBES.—HERODOTUS' INITIATION INTO THE MYSTERIES OF OSIRIS AND ISIS.—RELIGIOUS CHARACTER OF THE EGYPTIANS.—EGYPTIAN DEITIES.—WORSHIP OF OSIRIS.—DOCTRINE OF THE TRANSMIGRATION AND IMMORTALITY OF SOULS.—CONNEXION BETWEEN OSIRIS AND DIONYSUS ZAGREUS, AND BETWEEN ISIS AND THE CHTHONIAN DEMETER.—STORY TOLD BY THE PRIESTESSES OF ZEUS AT DODONA.—HERODOTUS' FIXED OPINIONS OF THE GODS.—ABSURD MISTAKES OF THE GREEKS.—REAL ANTIQUITY OF THE GODS.—EGYPTIAN WORSHIP OF ANIMALS.—COLLEGES FOR THEIR SUPPORT.—SACRED CROCODILES.—SNEERING OF THE GREEKS, AND SUBLIME PROPHETICAL DENUNCIATIONS OF HOLY WRIT.—EGYPTIAN RELIGION A CORRUPTION OF THE PURE WORSHIP OF GOD.

In the spring of B. C. 454 Herodotus took a passage on board a Nile boat, for the purpose of proceeding up the river to the great city of Thebes.

The Egyptian river-craft were flat-bottomed, with vertical sides, and were made of acacia timber in the following manner. Stakes about a yard long were set up near each other, and traced out the sides of the intended barge. Round these stakes were then carried stout and long strings of acacia plank, one course above the other, which joined the stakes together, and completed the construction of the sides. Cross-beams were then laid on the top along the entire length of the vessel, and the result was a rude, flat-bottomed lighter lying bottom upwards. The seams were caulked inside with tow made of papyrus. One rudder only was employed, and that was driven through the keel. The mast was made of the acacia tree, and the sails of papyrus. These vessels could not sail up stream unless they were

propelled by a strong and favourable wind; they were therefore towed along from the shore. Herodotus, however, met numerous vessels coming down stream towards the Delta, and these were carried along in the following singular fashion. A hurdle was made of tamarisk, and wattled with a band of reeds: a stone weighing about a hundred-weight was also procured, and a hole bored through its centre. The hurdle was fastened to a cable and lowered from the prow of the vessel to be carried along by the stream. The stone was fastened to another cable, and lowered from the stern. By these means the hurdle, being borne along by the stream, moved quickly, and drew along the lighter. On the other hand, the stone, having sunk to the bottom, was dragged along at the stern, and kept the lighter in its course. The vessel itself was called a baris, and the Egyptians had a great number of them, some of them carrying many tons.

The voyage was slow and dreamy, but full of interest and attraction. About thirty miles to the south of Memphis was Lake Mœris, and also the celebrated Labyrinth; and Herodotus was enabled to spend a day on shore and visit them.

Mœris was an immense artificial lake, formed in the oval-shaped valley of Fayoum, and surrounded by an arm of the Libyan mountains. In the centre were two pyramids, each said to be rising 300 feet above the surface of the lake, and to extend to the same depth under the water. Before each pyramid was a stone statue seated on a throne. The lake was supplied with water by a channel from the Nile; and for six months the water flowed from the Nile into the lake, and for the other six months out of the lake again into the river. Whilst the water was flowing out, the fish from the lake yielded a silver talent every day to the treasury of the Persian satrap; whilst, however, the water was flowing in, it only produced a third of that sum. The natives told Herodotus that the lake

discharged itself through a subterranean passage running in a north-westerly direction towards the Syrtis, in the Mediterranean. Our traveller could not see any heap of excavated soil, and thereupon inquired where it was to be found, and was told that it had been thrown into the Nile, and so dispersed. The latter part of this statement seemed perfectly credible, for he remembered hearing a story of some thieves at Nineveh, who planned the robbery of the subterranean treasuries of Sardanapalus. These thieves began at their own dwellings, and actually excavated a subterranean passage by estimated measurement to the royal treasuries; and every night they threw the soil into the Tigris, and the river dispersed it all, so that they were at last able to effect their design without detection.

The great Labyrinth was an equally surprising work of art; and was said to have been built by the twelve kings. Herodotus had heard a great deal of this structure, even before his visit to Egypt; but he found that it exceeded all that had been said concerning it. He considered that it surpassed the pyramids, and that more money and labour had been expended upon it than upon all the public buildings in Hellas put together, not excepting the great temple of Artemis at Ephesus, and the great temple of Hera at Samos. It consisted of a square, six hundred feet long, and five hundred feet broad, surrounded on three sides by clumps of buildings, and on the fourth by a pyramid. Within the square were twelve enclosed courts, divided into two ranges; and each range of six courts looked in an opposite direction to the other, towards the buildings which formed the sides of the great quadrangle. The three clumps of buildings which surrounded the quadrangle on three of its sides consisted of innumerable chambers, of which there were said to be three thousand in all, fifteen hundred being above ground, and fifteen hundred underneath. The Egyptians in charge of the Labyrinth would

not permit Herodotus to enter the subterranean chambers, alleging that they were the sepulchres of the twelve kings and of the sacred crocodiles. The upper chambers, however, alone surpassed all human works that he had ever seen. He walked through an almost infinite number of winding passages, which led through the different halls and corridors, and presented at every step a thousand occasions for wonder; and he passed from spacious halls through smaller chambers, and from these again to large, magnificent courts, in the utmost amazement at the infinite variety of the communications. The ceilings and walls were all of stone, and the walls were richly carved with sculptured figures referring to ancient scenes in Egyptian history. A splendid colonnade of white stone ran round each court; and even the pyramid, which was two hundred and forty feet high, and covered an area of nearly four hundred feet square, was covered with finely carved figures.

Since the year when Herodotus visited this wonderful monument, the whole has been for many centuries buried beneath the earth. The Prussian expedition, however, which was sent out three or four years ago under the direction of Dr. Lepsius, have recently exhumed the Labyrinth, and explored its remains. They found the square covered with the ruins of great monolithic pillars of fine red granite, in the old Egyptian style, with lotus-bud capitals. Fragments of this costly material also lay about, and showed that it had been likewise used for shrines and statues. Numerous columns were also to be seen, of hard, white limestone, gleaming like marble, which had been brought from the quarries in the Arabian mountains. Of the chambers there were literally hundreds, by and over each other, often very small, by the side of others larger and greater, supported by pillars and with thresholds, niches, and remains of pillars, and single wall slabs, and connected together by corridors, but without any serpentine,

cave-like windings. Whether there really ever were three thousand chambers is very doubtful; but the exactness of the statements rests on the fidelity of the Egyptians who took Herodotus over the buildings, and who were exceedingly likely to exaggerate the wonders under their charge. He himself was in a state of utter bewilderment, and only came away with a vague impression of "no end" of halls, chambers, colonnades, and corridors. Moreover it has been discovered, that the Labyrinth was not built by the twelve kings, as Herodotus was told, but by a king named Ammenemes III., who belonged to the twelfth dynasty of Pharaohs, which reigned before the invasion of the Shepherds.*

After a nine days' voyage from Memphis, Herodotus at last reached the great city of Thebes, and one of the most ancient in the world. For more than a thousand years she had been the capital of Upper Egypt; and in primeval times had been the metropolis of a vast empire, extending over unknown realms of Africa and Asia, but whose annals were only to be found in the historical reliefs which adorned her mighty temples.

The city was built on both sides of the Nile, and the approach was most imposing. On the right hand Herodotus could see the grand temple, known as the Memnonium, with its huge colossal statues of departed monarchs. On his left were the magnificent temples known as those of Luxor and Karnac, with their mysterious avenues of enormous sphinxes, and their richly carved pillars and ponderous propylæa. The Persian sway, however, had broken down the ancient splendour and prosperity of the city. The once haughty and all-powerful priests were no longer elevated above all human cares and anxieties, but gnashed their teeth at those impious Persians who had plundered the temples and demolished the sacred images; whilst the effectual suppression of the recent revolt of

* See Geog. of Herod. p. 425, &c.

Inarus had increased the rapacity and tyranny of the rulers, and aggravated the general distress and despair of every caste of Egyptian society.

Herodotus spent nine months at Thebes, which he principally passed in researches of a serious and deeply interesting character. We have already stated that the people had made an extraordinary impression upon our traveller, by their peculiar civilisation and stupendous architecture. This impression was deepened when he learnt the remoteness of their origin, and began to penetrate the depths of their mysterious religion; and the same religious fervour which carried him through the initiation into the several mysteries of Demeter and Dionysus, induced him to offer large gifts to the Egyptian priests, and procure his further initiation into the mysteries of Osiris and Isis. A new light soon dawned upon his mind. He began to believe that the knowledge and worship of the gods had been carried from Egypt into Greece; that the Greek religion was only a corruption of the true, primeval faith; and that even the lofty doctrines connected with the immortality of the soul which had been unknown to Homer and Hesiod, had been taught from the remotest period by the sages of Memphis and of Thebes.

In the eyes of an intelligent heathen like Herodotus, to whom the Word of God and the worship of Jehovah were alike totally unknown, the Egyptians appeared to be excessively devoted to the gods. He had very good grounds for believing that it was from them that the Greeks learned to assign altars, temples, and images to the several deities, and to institute religious festivals, solemn processions, and the mysterious introduction of a worshipper into that holy recess or inner sanctuary which contained the image or emblem of a god, and was supposed to be a residence of the divine person. Every day in the Egyptian calendar was consecrated to the wor-

ship of a particular deity; and according to the day upon which a person was born the priests foretold his future fortunes, the life he would lead, the character he would exhibit, and the death he would die. The people were always discovering prodigies, and whenever one occurred, the result was carefully observed and noted down; and if the prodigy was ever repeated, a similar issue was predicted. Omens were frequently drawn from common accidents, as tokens of good and bad luck. Oracles were consulted on all important occasions; but they were never supposed to come from the shades of departed men, or of heroes, as in Greece, but only from a few of the gods. They were of a very remote date in Egypt; and Herodotus heard a curious tradition, that the ancient oracle at Dodona in Epirus was of Egyptian origin; and the truth of this tradition was even confirmed by the priestesses of Dodona. This tradition we shall have presently occasion to relate.

The gods of Egypt were divided into three classes. The first consisted of the eight primary gods; the second of twelve gods; and the third of gods, including Osiris and Isis, which were all supposed to have sprung from the second class. The ages of these several gods were stated by the Egyptian priests, who declared that they knew the dates accurately, because the years had always been computed and registered. The first class had existed from time immemorial; the second had ruled on earth about 17,000 years before the reign of Amasis; and the third class had ruled about 15,000 years before Amasis. We will not involve the reader in the maze of Egyptian mythology, nor confuse him with a number of hard names; but some idea of the religious belief of the Egyptians is absolutely necessary, if we would really carry ourselves back to the ancient world; and this we will endeavour to convey in as few words as possible.

In the very early ages of mankind the existence of a

sole and omnipotent Deity, who created all things, seems to have been the universal belief, and was undoubtedly the belief of the Egyptians. Whether they really represented under any form their idea of this unity of the Deity is a very doubtful question. Probably his name was regarded by the Egyptians, as it was by the Jews, with such deep awe and reverence, as never to be uttered; and the Being of beings "who is, and was, and will be," was perhaps never even referred to in the sculptures, nor supposed to be approachable, unless under the name and form of some deified attribute, indicative of his power and connexion with mankind. Accordingly, the first class of divinities were in reality deified attributes indicative of the intellect, power, goodness, might, and other qualities of the Eternal Being. The second class consisted of lower emanations from the same source. The third class consisted of representations of inferior powers, of physical objects connected with the Creator, and of different abstract ideas, whose relative rank depended on the near or distant connexion they were deemed to possess with the divine origin.

The eight primeval gods of the first class consisted of four male and four female deities. Of these Kneph and Amun were both considered by Herodotus to be the same as the Zeus of the Greeks; whilst Pthah was identified with Hephæstus. In Kneph we probably see "the spirit," in Amun "the intellect," and in Pthah the "creative power." The other gods of the first class, and those of the second may likewise be identified with Greek deities; but we need not load our pages with their hard and unsuggestive names.

We must now glance at the most important element in the Egyptian religion, namely, the worship of Osiris. This deity usually formed a triad with his wife Isis and his son Horus; and he was also supposed to have been occasionally represented on earth by the calf Apis. The

Egyptian conceptions concerning him were of a deeply mysterious nature. They may be separated into two divisions, in accordance with his dualistic character. First, those which related to his ancient manifestation upon earth, in the form of a mortal king of Egypt. Secondly, those which were connected with his divine nature, as judge of the dead and ruler of Hades.

Osiris had been one of the god-kings of Egypt. By his wife Isis he had two children, Horus and Bubastis. He instructed the Egyptians in the arts of civilisation, teaching them agriculture, enacting laws, and establishing the worship of the gods. Subsequently he travelled over the rest of the world for the same purpose, and conquered the world, not by the force of arms, but by the mildness of persuasion. Osiris was thus a manifestation of the good principle, but his brother Typhon was a manifestation of the evil principle. Typhon accordingly conspired against Osiris and procured his death, and the body of the latter was torn into several pieces and scattered about the country. The son Horus, and the daughter Bubastis, or Pasht, were preserved by Leto in the floating island of Chemmis; but after a time war broke out between Horus and Typhon, and Osiris returned from Hades and assisted his son Horus, and thus finally obtained the victory over the evil principle.

After their departure from earth, Osiris and Isis were said by the Egyptians to hold the chief sway in the infernal regions. The popular belief of the Egyptians with respect to the spiritual life hereafter was as follows. They maintained that the soul of man was immortal, and that when the body perished the soul entered into some animal; and that thus it continued to exist until it had passed through the different kinds of creatures on the earth, in the sea, and in the air; after which it again assumed a human form, and thus completed a revolution which occupied three thousand years. Osiris, however, was

judge of the dead, and ruler over that kingdom where the souls of good men are received into eternal felicity, and it was he who decided when the soul of a deceased man was sufficiently purified for immediate admittance into the abodes of the blessed without undergoing any further transmigration. In the Egyptian monuments he is represented as seated on his throne in the centre of the divine abode, accompanied by Isis, and with the four genii of Hades standing on a lotus near him. In this position he received the account of the actions of the deceased which had been recorded by Thoth, the Egyptian Hermes. The actions of a deceased man were weighed in the scales of Truth, the feather or figure of the goddess of Truth being placed in one scale, and the virtuous deeds of the judged in the other. If the actions of the deceased when weighed were "found wanting," he was condemned to return to earth under the form of some animal; if, on the contrary, he was justified by his works, he was introduced by Horus into the presence of Osiris, and henceforth called by his name. Thus the souls of men were considered to be emanations of the deity: those of the good returned after death unto God who gave them; those of the wicked were doomed to pass through the bodies of different animals, until a purification, corresponding to their degree of impiety, had fitted them to return to that parent spirit from which they originally emanated.

We have already seen in a previous chapter* how mysterious doctrines had been taught in Greece by the exclusive brotherhoods of Pythagoreans and Orphics; and we have pointed out that the dogma of the Metempsychosis taught by Pythagoras, and the mysteries connected with the worship of Dionysus Zagreus, taught by the Orphics, were all foreign to the old Greek religion as developed by Homer and Hesiod, and were apparently

* Chap. XXXI.

imported into Greece during the period which intervened between Hesiod and Herodotus. That they were believed by our traveller to have been derived from Egypt will not be surprising to the modern reader. It was said that Pythagoras had resided for some time in Egypt, and his dogma of the metempsychosis was exactly the same as that taught by the Egyptian priests. Orpheus, too, was likewise said to have visited Egypt, and the myth taught by the Orphics of Dionysus Zagreus — the son of Zeus, who was torn in pieces by the Titans, and subsequently became the purifier of men's souls—bears so strange a resemblance to the Egyptian myth of Osiris, that we must readily concur with Herodotus in believing that the founder, whoever he was, of the Orphic sect, had boldly taken the religious conceptions of the Egyptians connected with Osiris and engrafted them on the old Greek ideas of Dionysus the god of renovating nature and of joy-inspiring wine. Thus Dionysus the jolly god of the vineyard was transformed, in the opinion of some mystics, into Dionysus Zagreus, and connected with the state of man after death. So likewise Demeter, the goddess of the harvest, became, in the mysteries of Eleusis, a similar divinity; for the seed corn that was buried in the earth — withering away like mortal flesh, but afterwards springing up into newer and better life — was even a more fitting emblem than the life-giving wine of the spiritual life beyond the grave.

Thus Herodotus identified Osiris with Dionysus and Isis with Demeter. Other identifications rapidly followed. Amun, who was more especially worshipped at Thebes, as Pthah was at Memphis, was identified with Zeus. Herodotus of course visited the great temple and oracle of Amun at Thebes; and there the priests told him that the oracle of Zeus at Dodona in Epirus and of Zeus Ammon in the Libyan desert were both derived from their own oracle of Amun. They said, that in ancient times two

women employed in the temple of Amun had been carried away from Thebes by certain Phœnicians; that one of them had been sold into Libya and the other into Greece; and that these two women were the first who established oracles either in Libya or Greece. Herodotus asked the priests how it was that they could speak so positively of such strange facts. They replied that diligent search had been made for the women at the time, but without success; and that subsequently they had heard the account which they now related.

We may here forestate a little event in the life of our traveller. Some years after his visit to Thebes, and whilst he was residing at Halicarnassus, he paid a visit to the ancient temple and oracle of Zeus at Dodona in Epirus; and here he made several inquiries of the three prophetesses Promenia, Timarete, and Nicandra, to see if any traces of such an origin were preserved in the temple traditions. The story told by these priestesses concerning the origin of the oracle was as follows: "In ancient times two black pigeons flew away from the great Egyptian city of Thebes, and one of them went to Libya, and the other to Dodona. When the latter pigeon reached Dodona, he perched himself upon an oak tree, and proclaimed in a human voice, that an oracle of Zeus should be erected on the spot; and the Dodonæans believing this strange proclamation to be a divine message, obeyed the command of the pigeon. The other pigeon who flew away to Libya alighted at the oasis of Ammonium, and in the same way commanded the Libyans to found the oracle of Ammon, which likewise belongs to Zeus."

Herodotus did not know for a long time what to make of this temple legend. He saw that the oracle at Dodona was delivered in the same way as that at Egyptian Thebes, and we may here remark, that in the oracles of Zeus the god did not, like Apollo, reveal himself by inspiration, but he merely sent signs which men had to interpret. Thus,

both at Thebes and Dodona, the oracle was given by the wind which rustled through the foliage of lofty oaks, brazen vessels being suspended on the branches, and blown about until they came in contact. At Olympia, the only other oracle of Zeus in Greece, the priests interpreted the will of the god from the entrails of the victim, or from accidental circumstances connected with the sacrifice; but even this oracle seemed connected with Egypt, for the Egyptians were the first who practised the art of divination from victims.

At last Herodotus began to think that if the story told by the Theban priests was really true, it might be reconciled with that told by the Dodonæan priestesses in the following manner. He knew that the Dodonæan Zeus was generally admitted to be a Pelasgian deity who had been worshipped by the old Pelasgian inhabitants of Hellas from time immemorial; and he therefore decided, that if the Theban woman had been sold in Greece at all, she must have been sold to the Dodonæans in the Pelasgian period. The woman having been reduced to slavery, would naturally erect a little sanctuary to Amun, under an oak tree, in memory of the great temple of Amun at Thebes, from whence she had been carried away. In the same way, when she had learned the Greek language, she would naturally institute an oracle. Why the woman, and consequently her sister in Libya, were called doves by the Dodonæans, might be explained by the fact that they at first spoke a foreign language. Whilst, therefore, the woman spoke like a barbarian, the Dodonæans would compare her language to the chattering of birds; and when at length she spoke intelligibly, they would say that the bird had spoken with a human voice. Their saying that the dove was black only went to prove that the woman was an Egyptian.

We cannot do better than here sum up the fixed opinions which Herodotus gradually formed of the mythology of

his native country. He believed that the gods had been worshipped by the Pelasgians from time immemorial, the Pelasgians sacrificing their victims with prayer, but giving no names to the deities, and only calling them gods because they had set all things in order, and ruled over all things. Subsequently the people became acquainted with the names of the gods of foreign countries, but principally with those of Egypt; and then, by the assistance of the oracle of Dodona, names were gradually given to the Pelasgian deities, and the Greeks received them from their predecessors the Pelasgians. The real origin and form of the Greek gods he believed to have been unknown until a very recent period; and he presumed that Homer and Hesiod, being inspired by the divine Muses, were the first who framed the Greek theogony, and assigned honours and attributes to the several gods, and declared their several forms.

But to return to Thebes. Whilst there Herodotus was convinced of the absurd mistakes of those Greeks who supposed that gods had lived upon earth at a comparatively recent period, and who thus compiled genealogies connecting living families with gods and heroes. For instance, he had heard in Greece that Dionysus, the son of Semele, was born only 1600 years before his own time; that Heracles, the son of Alcmena, was born only 900 years before; and that Pan, the son of Penelope, was even born subsequently to the siege of Troy. Now, if these deities had been well known, and had grown old in Greece, it might have been supposed that they were men who had been named after some of the ancient gods; but in reality little was known of them beyond wild and improbable fable. Herodotus, therefore, believed that the Greeks traced the origin of their gods to the time when they first named them. The Egyptian priests assured Herodotus that the Egyptian Dionysus lived 15,000 years before the reign of Amasis; that Heracles lived 17,000 years before; and that

Pan even lived before Heracles. Herodotus, however, considered that Heracles was perhaps an exception to the rule; for though Heracles, the god, might have lived in such primeval times, yet Heracles, the hero, and the son of Semele, undoubtedly belonged to a much later period. Thus those Greeks acted most correctly who built two different kinds of temples to Heracles, and sacrificed to one as an immortal god, under the name of the Olympian Heracles, and paid honours to the other as Heracles, the hero.

As a proof of the real antiquity of the gods, and of the immense number of years which must really have elapsed since they lived upon the earth, the priests of Thebes took Herodotus into a very spacious chamber, and showed him a number of wooden colossi, 345 in all. "There," said they, "every high-priest places a wooden image of himself in this chamber, once during his life-time; and each high-priest after his death is succeeded in the office by his son, who does the same. Thus each colossus represents a generation, and is called a Piromis, which signifies "a noble and good man;" and thus there have been 345 generations of mortal men since the era of the god-kings; and yet your countryman, Hecatæus of Miletus, had the presumption to draw up a genealogy of himself, connecting himself with the gods, and making only sixteen generations intervene."

Thus far it will be seen that there were many doctrines connected with the Egyptian religion which were calculated to excite the awe and admiration of a worshipper of Greek gods. The dogma of the immortality and transmigration of the soul, the belief in the mysterious attributes of Osiris as judge of the world of spirits, and the elaborate registers which carried back the age of the dynasties of the god-kings for a hundred centuries before the living generation, were indeed sufficient to awaken the keen religious fervour of a mind already powerfully im-

pressed by a recent initiation into the mysteries of Eleusis. But notwithstanding these lofty conceptions, the whole land of Egypt was wrapped in a superstition and idolatry so absurd that even our traveller, fearful as he was of exciting the wrath of any unknown divinity, was often scarcely able to refrain from a shout of laughter. This was no less than the national worship of animals, and especially of cats and dogs. In whatever house a cat might happen to die, all the family immediately shaved off one of their eyebrows for grief at their loss; if it was a dog that died, they shaved the entire head and body. Cats and dogs, ichneumons, field-mice, hawks, bears, and wolves were all embalmed and buried according to established rules. Cats were said to be much attracted by flames, and accordingly, whenever a house caught fire, the Egyptians never troubled themselves to put it out, but concentrated all their energies in taking care of the cats. Meantime these domestic animals being seized by a supernatural impulse, or actuated by an instinctive obstinacy, endeavoured to make their escape from their protectors, and leap into the midst of the conflagration. Sometimes, by a successful spring, they were enabled to achieve their own immolation; and whenever this took place, the Egyptians set up the most pathetic lamentations. Bulls and cows, and the bird called the ibis were also held in great veneration. Dead cows were consigned to the sacred waters of the Nile. Bulls, on the other hand, were interred in the suburbs of the several cities to which they might happen to belong, with their horns sticking up over the spot to mark their grave; and after a time, a raft, which made a regular circuit to every city, carried away the bones to the city of Atarbechis, which contained a temple of Athor or Aphrodite, and here the bones were all buried in one place.

Besides, however, this general veneration for animals, large establishments or colleges were founded for their

support. Curators, consisting of both men and women, attended upon the animals and fed each species separately, and the children of the curators succeeded their fathers in this extraordinary office. The money for the necessary expenses was derived from vows, which were thus kept by the Egyptians in the cities. Whenever a man made a vow to the god to whom some animal was sacred, he shaved either the whole, the half, or the third of his children's heads, and weighed the hair, and he then gave a corresponding weight of silver to the curator of the animals for whom he had vowed. Any person who wilfully killed an animal was put to death; and any person who killed an animal by accident, was obliged to pay whatever fine the priest might choose to impose; but whoever killed an ibis or a hawk, whether wilfully or otherwise, was always obliged to suffer the fatal penalty.

Crocodiles were only considered to be sacred by some of the Egyptians; by others they were treated as enemies. Thus the Egyptians round about Lake Mœris and in the neighbourhood of Thebes, considered them to be very sacred; and there almost every one trained up a crocodile until it was quite tame, and put ear-rings of gold and crystal into its ears, and bracelets on its four paws. These crocodiles were fed with sacred and particular food, and were treated as well as possible whilst alive, and after death were embalmed and buried in sacred vaults, and especially in those of the Labyrinth. On the other hand, the Egyptians who dwelt about the southern frontier would kill and eat the crocodile without the slightest hesitation; but we shall have occasion to mention other particulars connected with this animal when we relate Herodotus's further voyage up the Nile. In the same way the hippopotamus, or "river-horse," was only regarded as sacred in Papremis, in the Delta, and the worship of other animals, which we need not name, was likewise only confined to particular districts.

In the course of a very little time, Herodotus found, as he thought, a sufficient apology for this preposterous idolatry, in the mystical doctrines of the Egyptian priests. He saw that every animal was sacred to some particular deity. That the cat was sacred to the goddess Bubastis, or Pasht, who answered to the Artemis of the Greeks, and was often represented in the Egyptian monuments with a cat's head. That the bird ibis was sacred to Thoth, the Egyptian Hermes, who weighed the actions of deceased men in the scales of truth, before the tribunal of Osiris; that bulls were sacred to Apis, cows to Isis, and other animals to other gods which we need not mention. He also discovered that the instinct of a certain animal was supposed to represent the attributes of that god of which it was the emblem; and that the initiated and better educated worshipper only reverenced an animal as a type of one of the attributes of deity, whilst the mass of the people converted type into substance, and adored the emblem in the place of the divinity.

The modern student in the Egyptian religion might be inclined to trace the animal worship of this extraordinary people to a far more simple origin. In very remote times the country would appear to have been separated into many independent nomes or districts, each of which may have been under the rule of a certain number of priests and military. An animal may thus have been originally chosen as a symbol, which should keep together the inhabitants of a particular district, and thus be at once the emblem of a god and the ensign of a nationality. The adoption of an animal as the type of a nation is too old and general a practice to require any observation; and the instinct of the animal chosen has generally been supposed to indicate the national spirit. The lion of England and the eagle of France are cases in point; and we think we may find some traces of this simple and frequently beautiful imagery in the sublime prophetical blessings

pronounced by the old patriarch Jacob over his twelve sons in the land of Goshen: "Judah is a lion's whelp; Issachar is a strong ass couching down between two burdens; Dan shall be a serpent by the way; Naphtali is a hind let loose; Joseph is a fruitful bough."*

But whatever may have been the simple origin of such idolatry, it was soon enveloped in mysticism and superstition, and gradually approached the fetish worship of the neighbouring Libyans, and even to that of the modern Ashantees. The intelligent philosophers of Greece derided it; the inspired prophets of the Hebrews denounced it as an abomination. Anaxandrides the Greek said,—

"Whilst you, Egyptians, venerate an ox,
I sacrifice him to th' Olympian gods.
You think an eel the mightiest deity;
I love him as the very best of fish.
You eat no pork; I like it above all things.
You pay the greatest reverence to a dog;
I always beat him if he steals my meat.
You weep whene'er you see a cat in grief;
But I first kill the cat, and then I skin him.
You have a great opinion of the mouse;
But I have not the slightest reverence for it."†

It is useful to compare this ignorant but lively sneering with the sublime prophetical denunciations of holy writ: "I will destroy the counsel of Egypt, and they shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards; and the Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall reign over them saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts."‡ . . . "Thus saith the Lord God; I will also destroy the idols, and will cause their images to cease out of Noph (Memphis); and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt; and I will put fear into the land of Egypt."§ . . . Such were some of the thrilling prophecies

* Gen. xlix.
† Athenæus, vii. 55.
‡ Isaiah, xix. 3, 4.
§ Ezekiel, xxx. 13.

uttered in the days of Sethon and Apries, and which were so awfully fulfilled by the hand of Cambyses.

But Egypt had not sinned through ignorance. She had been frequently brought into contact with the patriarchs and prophets of the Hebrews, the sanctified conservators of the pure worship of Jehovah. Her degraded religion still retained, even down to the time of Herodotus, some glimmerings of that true faith which had perhaps shone with its brightest and best rays under the administration of the pious Joseph. The son of Jacob had himself married the daughter of the high-priest of Heliopolis, and thus connected himself with the priest caste; and it is impossible to believe that the virtuous Hebrew who had resisted the allurements of Potiphar's wife would have united himself with such a besotted and idolatrous priesthood as darkened the land in the time of our traveller. Even some of the ceremonies of the Egyptian ritual still bore a corrupt resemblance to others which belonged to the Mosaic law; and we conclude the present chapter with a description of the national mode of sacrifice in the days of Herodotus, as compared with a similar sacrifice enjoined by the inspired legislator of the Hebrews.

In the time of Herodotus all sacrifices were performed in the following manner. After a priest had rigidly examined the bull, to be satisfied that it was not unclean, he rolled a piece of papyrus round its horns, and sealed it with his signet. The victim thus marked was then led to the sacrificial altar, and a fire was kindled. Wine was next poured upon the altar, the god was invoked, and the bull was killed. First of all the head was cut off and the body flayed, and the following imprecations were pronounced upon the head: "May all the evil that is about to happen, either to the sacrificers or to the country of Egypt, be averted, and fall upon this head." The head was then thrown into the river Nile; but if any Greek

merchants resided in the neighbourhood, the head was usually sold to them, and they appear to have cooked and eaten it without scruple.

That this ceremony was a corruption of the significant rites connected with the scapegoat, will, I think, be at once perceptible to every Scripture reader. "And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness; and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited; and he shall let go the goat into the wilderness."*

Such was one of the holy rites of the Levitical law, which prefigured the coming of that glorious Messiah who "hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows;" and Egypt, that knew the Lord's will and did it not, was punished with many stripes. "It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations."†

* Leviticus, xvi. 21, 22. † Ezekiel, xxix. 15.

CHAP. XXXVII.

ETHIOPIA, ARABIA, AND PHŒNICIA, B. C. 454.

VOYAGE FROM THEBES TO ELEPHANTINE. — HERODOTUS'S INQUIRIES CONCERNING THE INUNDATION OF THE NILE. — THEORY WHICH REFERRED IT TO THE ETESIAN WINDS. — THEORY WHICH REFERRED IT TO MELTED SNOW. — THEORY WHICH REFERRED IT TO THE RIVER OCEAN. — THEORY OF HERODOTUS, THAT IT WAS CAUSED BY THE NORTH WINDS, WHICH BLEW THE SUN TOWARDS THE SOUTH. — REAL CAUSE. — ABSURD STORY OF THE REGISTRAR AT SAIS. — INQUIRIES ABOUT ETHIOPIA. — GEOGRAPHY. — UPPER COURSE OF THE NILE. — TRADITIONS CONCERNING THE ETHIOPIANS. — ENVOYS SENT BY CAMBYSES. — GOLDEN FETTERS. — TABLE OF THE SUN. — CRYSTAL SEPULCHRES. — CROCODILES. — MODE OF CATCHING THEM. — NILE SUPPOSED TO BE LIKE THE DANUBE. — ANCIENT EXPEDITION OF FIVE NASAMONIANS THROUGH THE SAHARA DESERT TO TIMBUCTOO. — HERODOTUS'S RETURN VOYAGE TO MEMPHIS. — RELIGIOUS DOUBTS. — HERODOTUS PROCEEDS TO TYRE IN PHŒNICIA. — THE PHILISTINES. — DESERT OF ARABIA PETRÆA. — STRANGE STORY OF THE CONVEYANCE OF WATER OVER THE DESERT. — THE JEWS OF PALESTINE. — THE PHŒNICIANS OR CANAANITES. — COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISE OF THE SIDONIANS AND TYRIANS. — HIRAM AND JEZEBEL. — HISTORY OF TYRE. — APPEARANCE OF THE CITY. — TEMPLE OF MELCARTH, THE HERACLES OF THE GREEKS AND BAAL OF THE HEBREWS. — ANTIQUITY OF THE GOD.

FROM Thebes Herodotus sailed up the river on an exploring expedition towards the southern frontier of Egypt.

The Nile is a very mysterious stream; and Herodotus made numerous inquiries concerning the causes of its yearly overflow and the position and nature of its sources; but he could obtain very little information, either from the priests at the different cities he visited, or from the different seamen who navigated the Nile boats, or indeed from any one. The yearly inundation, as we have already seen, was at its height in the autumn, when all other rivers were

very shallow, from having been exhausted by the heat of the summer's sun; whilst early in the spring, when other rivers were swollen by the rains of winter, the Nile was rapidly sinking to its lowest level. Greek philosophers, and especially the Ionians of Miletus, had propounded many bold and ingenious theories to account for the various phenomena; but Herodotus, after having carefully investigated and rejected them all, finally adopted a theory of his own, which, like all young men's theories upon subjects which they cannot understand, was even more wild and visionary than those of his predecessors.

As the scientific controversies of the Greek philosophers, some twenty-three centuries ago, cannot fail to be amusing to the modern reader, we shall enter at some length upon the Nile question. In the first place, Thales of Miletus had taught, more than a century before, that the Etesian winds, which blew from the north during the summer, blew against the stream of the Nile, and, by preventing the river from discharging itself into the sea, caused it to overflow its banks. This theory Herodotus considered to be exploded by the fact, that the Nile had sometimes inundated the country when the Etesian winds were not blowing; and also by another fact, that there were many rivers, both in Syria and Libya, with smaller and weaker currents, which flowed against the same winds without overflowing their banks. "So much," thought Herodotus, "for old Thales."

A second theory was propounded by Hecatæus, another philosopher of Miletus, whose writings we have had occasion to notice in our first volume. Here we ought to mention that the popular idea of the earth in the time of Herodotus was that the world was flat and round, and that a river flowed all round it under the name of River Ocean. Accordingly, in reference to the inundations of the Nile, Hecatæus considered that they were caused by the River Ocean, from which, as he said, the river Nile

took its rise. Now, from some cause or other, Herodotus had no great love for Hecatæus. He considered it very arrogant and ridiculous for the logographer to have drawn up his own genealogy, and to have made only sixteen generations intervene between himself and a divine ancestor. He thought it also equally presuming for Hecatæus to attempt to draw a map of the entire circuit of the earth, when it was utterly impossible that he should know anything whatever of its more remote regions. Indeed, in scientific conversations at Athens and elsewhere, our traveller had frequently amused himself at the expense of the Milesian logographer. "I cannot but laugh," he used to say, "when I see persons like Hecatæus drawing a map of the earth as round as a chariot wheel, just as if it had been made circular by a turner's lathe; and then representing the River Ocean as flowing all round it, beginning at the place where the sun rises. Really we have no evidence whatever, excepting what we may derive from some obscure fable, that the River Ocean ever existed at all. The most likely thing is that Homer or some of the earlier poets, finding the name Oceanus, introduced it into poetry, and consequently writers like Hecatæus must needs talk about it in plain prose." We need scarcely add that the arguments which Herodotus brought forward against the existence of the River Ocean were sufficient to demolish the theory that the Nile flowed from it.

A third theory was likewise taught by some philosophers whose names have been lost to posterity, viz., that the Nile flowed from a region of snow which was necessarily melted during the summer months. Herodotus, however, could not understand the existence of snow in the hot regions of the south; and that the southern regions were very hot he thought was sufficiently proved by many circumstances. The winds blowing from that quarter were very warm; the inhabitants became black from the excessive heat; kites and swallows remained there the

entire year; whilst the cranes, in order to avoid the cold of Scythia, repaired to those countries for their winter quarters. He therefore developed a theory of his own, which we shall now endeavour to explain.

He saw that during the summer the sun at midday stood in the middle of the heavens, and almost directly over his head; whilst in the winter it stood more towards the south, and never ascended so high in the sky. He supposed, therefore, that during the summer the Sun-god drank up the water from all rivers alike; but that as winter approached, the golden-haired deity was driven by the rude blasts of Boreas towards the southern regions of the sky, where he drank up the water from the Nile only. Consequently, during the winter, when other rivers were swollen with rain and snow, the Nile was almost dried up by the peculiar proximity of its sources to the Sun-god; and being fed by no rain or tributary streams, its waters were singularly weak and shallow. On the other hand, during the summer, when other rivers were partially dried up by the heat, the Nile alone being freed from the more immediate presence of the Sun-god, flowed on in its own natural but mighty flood.

Such was the simple character of the first speculations in physical geography — the sun blown about by the cold winds of Boreas, and being obliged during the summer season to restrict his potations to the Nile. But a generation which has gone mad about mesmerism and table-turning, can scarcely afford to laugh at the scientific theories of antiquity. Very little more than a century after the time of our traveller, Democritus and Callisthenes ascertained the true cause of the yearly overflow of the Nile, namely, the extraordinary character of the rainy season of Ethiopia. During the summer, the north winds are perpetually blowing from the Mediterranean towards the hot regions of Central Africa. These currents of air deposit very little of their moisture in their

passage over the heated and level soil of Egypt, and scarcely any rain ever falls in that country; but when the currents reach the lofty mountains of Abyssinia, the cold condenses their vapours into heavy torrents of rain, and the immense mass of waters drains off the western side of the Abyssinian highlands, and is thus poured into the channel of the Nile.

The situation and character of the sources of the Egyptian river seemed to defy all speculation. The registrar, or rather bursar of the treasury of the temple of Neith at Sais, had professed to know all about them; but Herodotus had very great doubts of his veracity. The bursar said that between the cities of Syrene and Elephantine, on the southern frontier of Egypt, there were two mountains terminating in peaks, named Crophi and Mophi; that between these two mountains were the sources of the Nile, unfathomably deep; and that from thence one half of the river flowed northward through Egypt, and the other half southward through Ethiopia. He added, that King Psammetichus had endeavoured to ascertain the depth of the mountains with a sounding line many thousand fathoms in length, but could not find a bottom. Herodotus accordingly determined to sail up the Nile as far as he could, and endeavour to learn the truth from the natives dwelling in the direction of Ethiopia.

Full of these big intentions, Herodotus left Thebes, and taking a passage on board another Nile boat, at last reached the city of Elephantine. Here, however, the series of rocky rapids, at present known by the name of the First Cataract, checked his further progress up the mysterious stream. He might, indeed, have gone farther by land, and perhaps have reached the island of Meroe, and penetrated the fabled regions of hoary Ethiopia. But the stories told of the pillaging disposition of the natives inhabiting the intervening countries, the reported difficulties of the route, and, above all, a growing longing to return to

Athens or Halicarnassus, determined him upon regarding the First Cataract as an insurmountable barrier; and he decided that he might really collect as much information at Elephantine in a few weeks as he could during several years' journeyings up the dangerous stream.

The geography of those regions, to which Herodotus directed his attention at Elephantine, are so obscure, that we think perhaps our readers will thank us if we endeavour to picture them in accordance with modern discovery, before we retail the accounts which reached the ears of Herodotus.

The Nile is really formed by two distinct streams, which unite at Khartoum into a single river, at about 15½° north latitude, or about 600 English miles in a straight line southwards from Elephantine. These two streams are the celebrated White and Blue Niles; that from the south-west is called the White Nile, and that from the south-east is called the Blue Nile. The sources of the White Nile are still unknown, but they may be placed, by conjecture, near the equatorial line; those of the Blue Nile are at the 10th degree, north latitude, or about 380 English miles southward of Khartoum, and therefore nearly a thousand miles in a straight line southward from Elephantine. About 150 miles northward of the Blue Nile, a great river, known as the Tacazze, runs from the south-east in the same direction, and nearly parallel with it, until it at length falls into the united stream. The country between Elephantine and the junction of the Nile with the Tacazze may be called Lower Nubia; whilst the country southward of the junction may be called Upper Nubia, and included the Meroe and Ethiopia of the ancients. Upper Nubia, including Shendy, Halfay, and Sennaar, is a huge triangle, of which the two sides are formed by the White and Blue Nile on the west, and the Tacazze on the east, whilst the base on the south is formed by the lofty plateau of Abyssinia. In the northern part of

this triangle was the city and territory of Meroe; in the southern region were the Macrobian Ethiopians.

We can now explain to the reader the principal information which reached the ears of Herodotus at Elephantine. In ascending the stream of the river beyond Elephantine, the country was found to ascend likewise, and therefore it was necessary to attach a rope to both sides of the boat, and thus tow it along. If the rope happened to break, the boat was carried back by the violence of the current. This difficult navigation lasted during a four days' passage. Next came a large island in the Nile, named Tachompso, which was inhabited half by Egyptians and half by Ethiopians. Beyond the island was a vast lake, having the stream of the Nile flowing right through it. After leaving the lake, the Nile was wholly unnavigable, and the voyager had to disembark and perform a forty day's journey along the banks. Then he might again embark in another boat, and after a twelve day's farther voyage would reach the extensive city of Meroe. Thus Meroe was two months' journey southwards of Elephantine, and as for the Ethiopians, against whom Cambyses went to war, they were said to be a four months' journey from Elephantine.

The Ethiopians seem to have spread northwards in an immense variety of tribes as far as the southern frontier of Egypt. They included cave-dwellers and other savage races, besides the more civilised inhabitants of Meroe.

The Ethiopians southward of Meroe, against whom Cambyses planned his expedition, were the most astonishing people according to the traditions which were told Herodotus. They were said to be the tallest and handsomest of all men, having customs which differed from those of any other nation; and it was especially noticed that their kings were not chosen on account of their birth, or their superior bravery, or talents, but the people simply

selected the tallest and strongest man amongst them to be their sovereign.

Before Cambyses marched against these Ethiopians, he sent some fishermen of Elephantine, who were said to understand the Ethiopian language, to spy out the country. The fishermen were instructed what to say, and carried presents for the Ethiopian king, consisting of a purple garment, a golden neck-chain, a set of bracelets, an alabaster box of ointment, and a cask of palm wine.

When the envoys had performed the long journey to those distant regions, they laid their presents before the Ethiopian monarch, and addressed him as follows: "Cambyses, king of the Persians, is desirous of becoming your friend and ally; and he has accordingly sent us to confer with you, and to present you with these gifts which are such as he himself most delights in." The Ethiopian, however, knowing that they came as spies, answered as follows: "The king of the Persians has not sent these presents because he values my alliance, neither do you speak the truth; for the fact is, that you have come hither as spies. The Persian king, indeed, is not a just man; for, if he were, he would not desire other people's territory, nor would he reduce a nation to servitude which had done him no injury. However, give him this bow, and repeat to him this message: 'The king of the Ethiopians begs to inform the king of the Persians that when the Persians can draw with ease the accompanying bow, then, perhaps, they may attempt to make war upon the Ethiopians, if they come with more numerous forces; meantime, the king of the Persians had better thank the gods for not having inspired the Ethiopians with a desire to invade his or any other king's territory.'"

Having finished this elaborate and taunting message, he unstrung the bow and gave it into the hands of the envoys, and then began to pass remarks upon the presents. Taking up the purple cloak, he asked what it was, and

how it was made; and when the envoys explained to him the whole process of purple dyeing, he exclaimed, "Deceitful are the men, and deceitful likewise are their garments." Next he inquired about the neck-chain and bracelets, and when the envoys explained to him that they were intended as ornaments, he laughed, and said, "We have stronger fetters than these." Upon the box of ointment he repeated the remark which he had made upon the purple cloak. The palm wine, however, delighted him exceedingly; and he asked what was the food of the Persian king, and how long the Persians lived. The envoys replied, that the king fed on bread, and described to him its preparation from wheat; and, they added, that the longest life of a Persian was eighty years. The Ethiopian monarch declared that he was not surprised that men who fed on such stuff should live for so short a period, and that they never would live so long did they not invigorate themselves with the wine. He also informed the envoys that most of the Ethiopians lived to be a hundred and twenty years of age, and some even more; and that they fed on boiled flesh, and drank milk. The envoys expressed their astonishment at this longevity; but he led them to a fountain, which gave the same brilliancy to bathers as oil, and sent forth an odour resembling that of violets; and the water was so weak and light that nothing would float upon it, and this water was therefore considered to be so exceedingly wholesome, that it gave length of days to all who drank of it.

The envoys were next shown over the common prison, where they found all the prisoners fettered with golden chains. Next they saw the table of the sun, which was very famous. It consisted of a meadow in the suburbs of the capital, which was filled with cooked meats. The meat was in reality placed there every night by the city magistrates, and any one who chose might go and partake of it; but the Ethiopians said that the earth itself pro-

duced these provisions. Last of all the envoys visited the Ethiopian sepulchres. These were said to be prepared from crystal in the following manner. The body was dried and covered with gypsum, and painted to resemble real life as much as possible. It was then placed in a hollow column of crystal, which in that country was dug up in abundance and easily wrought. The body was thus plainly to be seen all round, without being in any way offensive. The nearest relations afterwards kept the column for a year, during which they offered sacrifices and first-fruits to the deceased. At the expiration of the year it was carried out and placed in the neighbourhood of the city.

Herodotus had previously heard at Memphis some account of this interview between the envoys of Cambyses and the king of Ethiopia, and he was glad to have it confirmed by the fishermen of Elephantine. His residence at this extreme frontier town was otherwise by no means pleasant, and he was not sorry when the time came for him to commence his return to the Delta. Before, however, he left the place he collected some curious particulars connected with the natural history of the crocodile, which in that neighbourhood was by no means regarded with any religious reverence, but was cooked and eaten by the natives without the slightest hesitation. The crocodile, he was told, tasted no food whatever during the four coldest months of the year. It was amphibious though it had four feet. It spent most of the day on the banks of the river, but the whole night in the river itself, which at that time was warmer than the air or dew. It laid its eggs on the land, and there hatched them; and of all living things it grew from the least beginning to the largest size. Its eggs were but little larger than those of a goose, and the little crocodile which emerged was at first only in proportion to the size of the shell; but when it arrived at maturity it reached a length of twenty-five feet,

or even more. It had the eyes of a pig, large teeth, and projecting tusks, all in proportion to the size of its body. It was supposed to be the only animal in the world that had no tongue, but this was a mistake; and modern naturalists have discovered that it has a fat, fleshy tongue attached very nearly up to the eyes. It was likewise supposed to be unable to move its lower jaw, and to be thus the only animal that brought down its upper jaw to the lower one. But the fact is, that the lower jaw is prolonged backwards beyond the skull, and the gape is proportionably enlarged; hence, when the crocodile raises its head, and throws it a little backward, on opening the mouth by the depression of the lower jaw, it has the appearance of moving the upper jaw. The claws of the animal were said to be exceedingly strong, and its skin was covered with scales, which on the back could not be broken. In the water it was blind, but on land it was very quick-sighted. All beasts and birds avoided it excepting the trochilus, which appears to have been the same as the little running bird at present called siksak by the Arabs. The crocodile was said to be at peace with the trochilus because it received the following benefit from it. When the crocodile was on land it opened its jaws, and usually towards the west; upon this the trochilus would boldly enter its mouth and pick out and swallow the insects which it found there.

The fishermen of Elephantine had several ways of catching this formidable animal, but the following is the one which principally attracted the notice of Herodotus. The fisherman baited the hook with the chine of a pig, and let it down into the river, and meantime he held a young live pig on the river bank and beat it. The crocodile hearing the noise, would soon proceed towards it, and meeting with the chine would swallow it. The men on the bank would then begin to draw the animal on shore, and as soon as possible plastered its eyes with mud; for

until they had done that, it would give them a great deal of trouble, but afterwards could be managed very easily.

Herodotus was obliged to leave Elephantine without gaining any further information concerning the upper course of the Nile than that which we have already narrated. He was totally ignorant of the existence of the Tacazze, or of the two rivers respectively called the White and Blue Niles. He had, however, a theory of his own, which appears almost as absurd to the modern geographer as his notion of the sun being blown into the south during the winter season by the fierce blasts of Boreas. He fancied that the Nile corresponded to the Danube, concerning whose upper course he was likewise totally ignorant. He therefore supposed that each river flowed from west to east through their respective continents, and then elbowed into the sea directly opposite each other; the Nile flowing from west to east through Africa, and then taking a northerly direction to the Mediterranean; and the Danube flowing from west to east through Europe, and then taking a southerly direction to the Black Sea. Whilst staying at Cyrene he heard a story which appeared to confirm this view, as far as the Nile was concerned. He was told that certain citizens of Cyrene once made a pilgrimage to the Oasis of Siwah to consult the celebrated oracle of Zeus Ammon. Here they had an audience with Etearchus, the king of the oasis, and after a conversation upon a variety of subjects, they chanced to talk about the River Nile, and the circumstance that no one was acquainted with its sources. Etearchus then remarked that at one time certain Nasamones, a powerful tribe of nomades occupying the region now called Western Tripoli, once came to the oasis to consult the oracle, and were asked if they could supply any information concerning the great impassable desert of the Sahara. They replied that there were some daring youths amongst them, sons of the most powerful chiefs, who having reached man's estate, formed

many extravagant plans, and amongst others chose five of their number by lot, and deputed them to explore the desert and see if they could make any additions to the then existing state of geographical discovery. The five young men set out on their expedition well supplied with water and provisions. They first passed through an inhabited country, then through a belt of territory which seemed to be in the possession of wild beasts, and at last they fairly crossed the Great Sahara Desert, and made their way towards the west. After a journey of many days, during which they traversed much sandy ground, they at length saw some trees growing in a plain. Accordingly they approached, and began to gather the fruit; upon which some small black men, who were shorter than men of middle stature, came up and seized them and carried them away. These natives were totally ignorant of the language of the Nasamones, nor could the latter understand the speech of the small men. However, the natives conducted their prisoners through vast morasses, until they reached a city where all the people were as short and black as themselves. By this city flowed a great river, running from the west to the east, and containing crocodiles.

This river seen by the Nasamonian adventurers was of course supposed by Herodotus to be the upper course of the Nile. We, however, guided by the light of modern discovery, and seeing no reason for disbelieving the main incidents of the story, are convinced that the river in question was the Niger, and that the city of small black men could not have been very far from the site of the more modern town of Timbuctoo.

There is no occasion for describing in detail Herodotus' return voyage to Memphis early in the year B.C. 453. Nearly every trace of the recent insurrection against the Persian supremacy had by this time disappeared from Egypt, and the current of the Nile carried him safely and speedily to his destination. He had intended to proceed

from Memphis to Naucratis, and thence to his native city of Halicarnassus; but at Memphis he changed his mind. The statements of the priests concerning the antiquity of the Egyptian deities oppressed him exceedingly. His religious opinions were again wavering. During his recent visit to Elephantine he had seen sufficient to convince him that the stories of the priests were by no means to be implicitly believed; and especially he had discovered, by the testimony of his own eyes, that the round assertion of the registrar of the treasury of Neith's Temple at Sais, respecting the fountain-heads of the Nile, was a cool invention. The priests of Thebes had certainly somewhat staggered him by their exhibition of 345 wooden piromis, each one the representative of a separate mortal generation; and at the same time there could not be the slightest doubt but that Hecatæus of Miletus was a most conceited coxcomb in declaring himself to have been descended from a god, and that only sixteen generations had intervened between himself and his divine ancestor. His religious belief was again in a state of chaos. For instance, the exploits of Heracles had delighted him from childhood, and were to have formed the subject of his early epic. He knew that, according to Greek tradition, Heracles, the son of Zeus and Alcmena, was living upon earth only 1600 years before his own time; but the Egyptians had a god — probably the abstract idea of strength — who appeared to be in every respect the same as the Greek Heracles, and yet the priests everywhere declared that the god had not appeared upon earth for upwards of 17,000 years. If the priests were correct, then his previous conjecture was perfectly true, namely, that Heracles the god and Heracles the hero were two totally different persons; but how was he to test the veracity of the Egyptian records? All at once he heard that the Phœnicians had a god Heracles, which at any rate was far more ancient

than the Greek Heracles; for there was said to be a temple still standing in the city of Tyre which had been erected in his honour at the first foundation of the city, 2300 years before, and consequently 800 years before the birth of the Greek Heracles. Anxious as our traveller was to return to Halicarnassus, and determined as he had been to get a passage on board the first ship which would run straight across the Mediterranean, yet this intelligence affected him to such an extraordinary degree, that he determined to return home round the coast of Syria, Phœnicia, and southern Asia Minor, and thus take the city of Tyre on his way, and be able to test with his own eyes the antiquity of the Tyrian temple.

A glance at the map will at once explain to the reader the route which Herodotus was now about to take. Proceeding from Memphis to Naucratis, he speedily procured a passage on board a coasting vessel bound in that direction; and thus, in the spring of B.C. 453, he sailed eastward along the shore of Arabia Petræa; then northward along the shore of Palestine, Phœnicia, and Syria; and, lastly, westward along the shore of Cilicia, Lycia, and Caria, to the port of Halicarnassus.

The first people whom Herodotus thus passed on his voyage were the maritime Arabs, or perhaps, as we should call them, Philistines. He also heard of the Arabs in the interior, better known to us by the name of Edomites or Idumæans, who roved through the desert of Arabia Petræa. The desert itself was an arid tract of three days' journey across, which intervened between Palestine and Egypt; and when Cambyses was marching against the latter country he was very much perplexed as to how he should obtain sufficient water for his army in its progress over that dry region. In this extremity, Phanes, the Halicarnassian officer who had deserted from the Egyptian service, advised him to send envoys to the king of the Arabs, and request a free

passage. The Arabian king granted the request, and exchanged pledges with the Persian envoys according to the Arabian fashion. A third person stood between the king and the principal envoy, and made an incision with a sharp stone in the palm of each, near the longest finger. He then took the nap from the garment of each and smeared seven stones with the blood; and whilst doing this invoked the Arabian deities Orotal and Alitta — the Sun and Moon. The Arab king then bound over some of his principal sheikhs to be his sureties that he would act faithfully towards the Persians; and he then loaded all his camels with skins of water and drove them to the arid tract already mentioned, and there awaited the army of Cambyses.

A strange exaggeration of the story of this water-supply likewise reached the ears of Herodotus; but it was so evidently the product of the oriental imagination of some child of the desert, that he rejected the narration without hesitation. It was said that twelve days' journey from the arid region there was a large river called the River Corys, flowing through Arabia into the Red Sea; that between this river and the arid region the Arabian king laid down three pipes made of ox-hides and other skins sewn together, and that he thus conveyed plentiful streams of water from the distant river into large reservoirs in the arid region. The two principal objections to the truth of the story were, first, that there was no large river in all Arabia Petræa; and, secondly, that all the skins in Arabia would be insufficient to form three pipes each twelve days' journey long.

Of the Jews or Syrians of Palestine, as they were called, Herodotus heard little or nothing during his present voyage. The second caravan had only recently returned from their captivity at Babylon, under the leadership of the celebrated Ezra, and the people were struggling, amidst great difficulties and dangers, to esta-

blish themselves in the ruined city of Jerusalem and its immediate neighbourhood. We shall have occasion to say something farther concerning this important nation in a future chapter.

At last Herodotus reached the mighty city of Tyre, at that time the most important in Phœnicia, and the great trading capital of the ancient world. The Phœnicians, or Canaanites, as they are called, had established themselves, at a primeval period, on the narrow strip of lowland territory between the range of Lebanon and the Mediterranean Sea. Here they built the old city of Sidon, which seems to have been named after Sidon, the first-born of Canaan, the son of Ham. Subsequently the Sidonians built the city of Tyre, which was therefore called the daughter of Sidon; and the Phœnician territory was known as the country of Tyre and Sidon. Other Phœnician cities were afterwards founded, and each one was governed by its own king. Sidon, however, seems to have been originally at the head of them all, but in the time of Herodotus had been long eclipsed by the glory and power of Tyre.

The Phœnicians were the great merchants of the ancient world. Their seamen were the first who boldly ventured out of sight of land and steered their ships by the stars. They traded with every nation and in every product. Their arts and manufactures were universally esteemed, and even the magnificent Solomon built his unrivalled temple under the direction of artists from Sidon and Tyre. About B.C. 1050—1000, Hiram, king of Tyre, was a steady and useful ally of David and Solomon; but at a subsequent period (B.C. 900) the marriage of Ahab, king of Israel, with Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of Tyre and Sidon, proved fatal to the best interests of the Hebrew people. The foul worship of Baal and Astarte—the Phœnician deifications of the Sun and Moon—demoralised the entire nation. The cere-

monies connected with that impious idolatry were vile and infamous to the last degree, but as fascinating and destructive as the brilliant evolutions of a poisonous reptile.

Tyre is mentioned as a strong city as early as the days of Joshua. In the time of Herodotus it was currently believed that Tyre had been founded 2300 years, or about B. C. 2700. At a more recent, but still very ancient, period, perhaps as far back as B.C. 1200, the city had become further enlarged by the peopling of a small island about three furlongs from the shore, and between two and three miles in circumference. Tyre was thus partly seated on the mainland and partly on the island. In this commanding situation she built the finest navy that at that time had ever floated on the waves; and with these ships she made voyages to Ophir and Tarshish, she circumnavigated the great continent of Africa, and she planted Carthage and other colonies innumerable. She thus became for ages the great emporium of all the merchants and all the trade in the world. Isaiah calls her the Merchant City, the Mart of Nations; and describes her merchants as princes, and her traffickers as the honourable of the earth.* Ezekiel says that her markets were visited by Judah and Israel, and by more than thirty of the leading nations of the world; so that she was replenished and made glorious in the midst of the seas.† Zechariah declares that she heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets.‡ Continental Tyre was taken by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, after a long siege, about B.C. 570, but Insular Tyre appears to have escaped. Subsequently, under the mild sway of the Persians, Insular Tyre regained a large portion of her old dignity and glory, being permitted to retain her independence on condition of supplying men

* Isaiah, xxiii. 3. 8. 11.

† Ezekiel, xxvii. 17. 25.

‡ Zechariah, ix. 3.

and ships to the Persian navy whenever her services should be required.

Such was the condition of Tyre when Herodotus reached the city. The captain of the ship, however, would only anchor at Tyre for two days; and Herodotus determined to spend the whole of that time in the temple of the Tyrian Heracles, and in communing with the priests of that deity. The port presented a different appearance from that of any harbour in Greece, excepting perhaps Corinth. Heavily laden ships were coming in from the distant cities of Carthage and Tartessus, from Gades, Cassiterides, and the golden Ophir. Long lines of weary camels were bringing the treasures of the east, the riches of Arabia, of India, of Babylon, and of the Caucasus, into the storehouses of the queen of cities. The streets were thronged with swarthy sailors, hurrying messengers, busy traders, solemn clerks with their reeds and rolls; and ever and anon some merchant prince rolled by in his luxurious chariot, eager to board some vessel which had just been signalled. The din of traffic was swelled by the constant noise of a thousand workshops; the glass-makers, the purple-dye manufacturers, the weavers of beautiful garments, the workers in gold, ivory, and precious stones, and numerous other artisans of every description were employed in continual labour. Our traveller, however, passed on, regardless of all, and guided only by one of the crew, towards the centre of the city; where at last he entered the magnificent precinct in which stood the splendid national temple of the Tyrian Heracles.

Melcarth, or "the city king," was the principal deity of the Tyrians, and the protecting divinity of Tyre. His worship was introduced into every settlement established by the merchant people; and every Tyrian colony honoured him as their national god, and were accustomed to acknowledge his supremacy by solemn embassies. He seems to have been the same as Baal, or the Sun, who,

with Astarte, or the Moon, and Moloch, the evil principle, were the great gods of the Phœnician race. According to the Tyrian legend, Melcarth made an expedition along the coasts of the Mediterranean as far as Iberia and the Pillars of Heracles *; and this tradition may be taken as an allegorical relation of the outspread of the people by trade and navigation, and of the general civilisation which was the natural consequence. This story was borrowed by the Greek mythologists, and transferred to the mythic history of Heracles the hero. Thus the Tyrian Melcarth and the Greek Heracles came to be regarded as the same god, for the same exploit was recorded of both deities; and the Phœnician priests always called their deity by the name of Heracles when addressing a Greek visitor.

The temple was splendid beyond all description. It was adorned in the richest and most magnificent style, and contained an immense variety of magnificent offerings from every colony founded by the Tyrian state. Of the two richly cut pillars which supported the entrance to the cella, one was made entirely of fine gold and the other of real emerald; and at night, when the lamps were lit and the evening sacrifices were offered, they both shone with a radiance and brilliancy which none could believe unless they had witnessed it. Eagerly did Herodotus inquire of the priests concerning the antiquity of the temple; and they assured him that it was built at the time that Tyre was founded, and that both the city and temple had stood for 2300 years. Thus was Herodotus convinced that the generation of gods and that of man were separated by an immeasurable chasm,—by ages that were beyond all mortal ken and calculation; and thus he finally believed that Heracles the god was an immortal divinity, but that Heracles the son of Alcmena was a mere human hero.

* See page 23.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

HALICARNASSUS, B.C. 453.

HERODOTUS' RETURN TO HALICARNASSUS. — STATE OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS. — PROJECTED MARRIAGE OF HERODOTUS WITH PHÆDRA. — OPPOSITION OF HERODOTUS. — ANXIETY OF HIS MOTHER DRYO. — AWFUL DISCOVERY. — HERODOTUS BECOMES RECONCILED TO CIRCUMSTANCES. — INTERVIEW WITH ARTEMISIA. — A NEW HOUSE. — A BETROTHAL. — CHARACTER OF GREEK LOVERS. — PRELIMINARY SACRIFICES. — A GREEK WEDDING.

HALICARNASSUS once more! The well-remembered shores, the familiar streets, his father's greeting, and his mother's embrace. Eleven years had passed away since Herodotus had left his native city, then a mere youth of twenty, but now a man entering upon his thirty-second year. His father's hair was whiter, and his mother's eye was dimmer; but these were all the changes he could note after so long an absence. They, on their part, saw that the fair-cheeked and enthusiastic boy had grown into experienced and energetic manhood; and the father at once looked forward to his son's triumphs in the council chamber, whilst the good lady fondly dreamed of grandsons and granddaughters, and inwardly lamented that no maiden in Halicarnassus was worthy to espouse a son so brave and beautiful.

Eleven years had passed away. They had stored his mind with knowledge; they had given vigour to his frame, and iron to his brow; but the vanished time seemed but as a dream, and Herodotus could no more realise its lapse, than the reader could suppose eleven years to have

passed away since he commenced the perusal of the present volume.

Days passed, but we have no space for detail. Herodotus told the story of his perils on sea and land at many a pleasant symposium, and to many an admiring audience. Pirates and banditti; shipwrecks and terrific thunderstorms; the evil character of Glaucus, and the quarrel with the money-changer in the agora at Athens; the savage chiefs of Thrace and Scythia, and the learned priests of Thebes and Memphis; the sterling good qualities of Phylarchus, and the genial hospitality of Euphorion; temples, festivals, games, and dramas;—all these, and countless other scenes and subjects were willingly described by our traveller to eager and wondering listeners. His father Lyxes, on the other hand, plied him with countless questions concerning the political condition and internal wealth of almost every city he had visited; and was equally astonished and delighted with the abundance of his son's information, and the shrewdness of his remarks.

The progress of public affairs at Halicarnassus had continued favourable to the ambitious views of Lyxes. The old queen Artemisia was now seventy-six years of age, and old age had enfeebled her powers. Her son, the reigning prince Pisindelis, was labouring under a disease which threatened sooner or later to carry him off altogether. Lygdamis, the heir apparent, had reached the age of fifteen, but seemed to possess a very feeble intellect, and to have inherited his father's disease. The plans of Lyxes were therefore fast ripening. He desired, in the first place, to bring about as soon as possible the marriage between Herodotus and Phædra, the sister of Lygdamis, who was now nineteen years of age; and then he intended that Herodotus should make himself as popular as he could in his native city, so that he might be prepared for any accident that should chance to occur.

Under these circumstances, it was not long before

Lyxes suggested to Herodotus the propriety of being married immediately. He praised the beauty of Phædra, hinted at the prospects which would attend so important a connexion, and finally reminded him that for many years the marriage had been decided on by himself and the queen Artemisia. Herodotus seeing that his father was resolutely bent upon the match, was afraid to say a single word concerning the daughter of Euphorion, and merely began to mutter some unintelligible objection, which Lyxes attributed to the natural reluctance of a roving bachelor to settle down as a married citizen. "I am aware," said the father, in a tone of quiet investigation, "that in most cases a wife is an evil, but then she is a necessary one. Marriage is a duty that every man owes to the state, as well as to his own race and lineage. Without it, the state would soon fall under the dominion of our slaves, and we should leave none behind us to make the necessary sacrifices to the shades of our illustrious ancestors. Your mother is indeed superior to most of her sex, and few men can hope to marry such a wife as she has proved to me; but Phædra has likewise been brought up in the most careful manner, and in the strictest seclusion. She is tall and handsome, totally unlike her grandmother the old queen, and will, I have no doubt, prove the best of mothers to your coming children. However, we will say no more of the matter to-day, but talk it over to-morrow."

When Herodotus found himself again alone, he began for the first time in his life to indulge in impious thoughts concerning the gods. He almost wished that Heracles the hero had been unsuccessful in some of his labours, that he had been vanquished by the Nemean lion or Lernean hydra; and with a strange but not unfrequent inconsistency, he considered that, if it had not been for Heracles and some of the other Egyptian gods, he should have proceeded straight to Athens instead of wandering

round to Tyre. Then he cursed his own folly in returning to Halicarnassus without first explaining everything to Euphorion, for it was now plain that he could not again leave his native city without first espousing Phædra or else incurring the lasting anger of his father. Indeed, for the time everything seemed to go wrong. It had been the custom since his return home for his mother Dryo to sit with him and his father for a few hours in the evening, if no guests were present. By some strange means the good lady had discovered that her son was averse to a marriage with Phædra, and straightway presumed that he had formed some foreign attachment. Accordingly, inspired by the most praiseworthy motives, she indulged in a general tirade against the ladies of every city and nation under the sun, Halicarnassus only excepted. At any other time Herodotus would have been amused; for as his mother had never read a single book or been fifty miles from Halicarnassus in all her life, her knowledge of the great world was somewhat confused and prejudiced. Her opinion of the ladies of other Greek cities was based upon some woman's scandal concerning the maidens of Sparta and Corinth; whilst her ideas of more foreign fair ones were similarly derived from some old nurse's story of syrens blessed with serpents' tails, and passionately fond of devouring their lovers or offspring. If any one should have been ensnared by one of these damsels she prophesied for that man, whoever he might be, eternal misery and disgrace. She had loved her son with the greatest possible affection, which, as we have already seen, he returned with almost equal ardour; and of course she mourned lest he should have been entangled in the net of a Corinthian damsel; or, worse than all, should, like the hero Heracles, have married a woman with a serpent's tail, and perhaps with even worse propensities. But Herodotus could neither smile nor say anything that would alleviate his mother's fears, whilst at the same time

Lyxes was enjoying the irritation of his son and the curious errors of his wife with a sarcastic gravity which was intensely irritating.

To tell the truth, Lyxes, like any other Greek citizen, cared very little what connexions his son had formed whilst away from Halicarnassus, so long as they did not interfere with the projected marriage. He placed very little stress upon his son's opposition, and accordingly reverted to the subject the very next day without the slightest hesitation. Herodotus was better prepared this time, and remarked that he had so very recently returned home after so long an absence, that he was really unable to settle down at once and be married without some little consideration. His increased years and travel had also given him a little independence of speech, and he complained that his father should want to marry him and get rid of him before he had scarcely seen him. Lyxes replied that marriage under any circumstances could not take place for some little time, but that it was necessary that Herodotus should be affianced as soon as possible; and that he ought to pay an immediate visit to the queen Artemisia, and be introduced to his intended bride. Herodotus again demurred, but was at last silenced by the following harangue from his father: — "I see how it is; you have lost your heart during your travels. Am I to expect an Ethiopian beauty or a Scythian princess for my daughter-in-law, or have you, like a modern Argonaut, married a new wife at every port in Hellas? Come, Herodotus, you must not yield to this foolery; you must not permit the beauty of some foreign maiden, bewitching though she may be, to charm you from the straight and brilliant path before you. You are a man now, and must marry like a man, and not like the crack-brained, sentimental boy who wrote epics and love lyrics. Halicarnassus is the very place for you to win not only fame but power. We are between Athens and Susa,

without fearing either power, but I know the Persian war cannot last for ever. Pericles is devoting all his powers to making Athens the first city in Hellas, and I believe that at this moment he is trying to come to terms with Sparta in order to lull her suspicion. Then there will be peace with Persia, and Halicarnassus may once more regain her ancient glories, and trample on the cities who excluded her from the Triopian confederacy. I have wealth in abundance, more than I have cared to be known in these troublous times. I have arranged for you a marriage in the royal family of our city, and you must overcome your weakness, whatever it may be. If you refuse, I shall have thrown away the labour of a life. Even Euphorion of Athens advises that you should be married. I have a scroll which he sent to me a year ago. He had just married his daughter, whom, he said, you saw at Athens, to some young Athenian; and he bade me tell you the news. I suppose he knew of some of your mad pranks. But what makes you look so warm? Is it this hot court? There, you had better take a walk up the hills, and when you come back we must arrange matters."

Herodotus wandered out, crushed and almost broken-hearted. Feverish and excited, the cool breezes from the Ægean blew in vain upon his heated brow. Friends greeted him in the streets and agora, but he heeded them not. He passed through the fields and gardens which environed the city until he came to a calm and retired spot, his favourite retreat in bygone days, and then throwing himself upon the turf, he sought to recover his scattered spirits.

"He had been deceived and crossed in love, but was he the first man who had experienced such reverses? He no longer cared for life, much less for fame or power; but might not this fit pass away, and was he not even now panting and burning for a change of existence, for

action, for strife, for anything which would carry his thoughts into another current? Was he — a man who had travelled from the Danube to the Nile — was he to trouble himself for a damsel, a slave, a toy, who had been coolly given to another for a wife? Did he not owe a duty to his father, and could he not soon show to Euphorion how distinguished was the husband he had lost for his daughter? But to marry Phædra! — that was a hateful thought; her very name disgusted him. But still he must marry— it was the duty of all citizens to marry. A wife would make the best of housekeepers, and Phædra, after all, might prove a very nice wife. A man, too, was all the better for not loving his wife too much, not worshipping her as though she were a goddess; he ought to be master and not a slave."

Such were the principal results of that afternoon's reflections. Indeed, in Hellas, the public life of the men, and the almost oriental seclusion of the women, checked the development of those beautiful affections which, in this more favoured age, can elevate and purify the human heart and cast the brightest halo round the humblest hearth. Herodotus returned to his father's house a wiser if not a better man for his meditations; and calming resigning himself to his fate, agreed to all that his father proposed. He likewise stoutly maintained that he had not, during the whole period of his travels, formed any connexion likely to interfere with his matrimonial happiness; and this last declaration of course gave the greatest delight to his affectionate but rather simple-minded mother. Thus the idea that he had made both his parents happy was sufficiently cheering to his well-constituted mind to reconcile him to the loss of the beautiful Euphrosyne, and even to his marriage with the unknown Phædra.

The next morning Herodotus accompanied his father on a visit to the old queen Artemisia. Though so ex-

ceedingly old, she received them both with a gracious air; which, however, became somewhat cloudy when she understood that Herodotus had never seen any active service. A little converse with our traveller upon foreign countries speedily removed the unfavourable impression. He spoke with the independence of Sparta and the politeness of Athens; and though he could not very well compliment the aged princess upon her beauty, yet he contrived to introduce some well-timed compliments upon her heroism at Salamis, and that too with a marvellous effect. Phædra did not make her appearance; but after their departure Lyxes congratulated his son upon the success which had attended their visit, and prophesied a speedy marriage.

A few days passed away and Herodotus found that he could by no means continue his usual pursuits. Very soon after his return to Halicarnassus he had examined the fragment of his old epic, "The Labours of Heracles," and carefully consigned it to the flames. He had likewise begun to arrange and copy out the various scraps of parchment and papyrus on which he had written divers notes and memoranda at different periods of his travels. But now he seemed as though he could attend to nothing and think of nothing but his approaching marriage. What is she like? was a question which he was perpetually asking himself. His father and mother had both seen her, and naturally fancying that he must be interested in her appearance, had frequently informed him that she was all that a lover could desire; and Herodotus was obliged to rest contented with such information until Lyxes and Artemisia should think proper to introduce him to his future wife.

At last, one morning, just as he was leaving the agora, where he had been chatting with some of the principal citizens, Lyxes suddenly approached him, and whispered in his ear, "Everything is settled; you are to be be-

trothed to-morrow, and married on the fourth of next month."

"To-morrow!" he exclaimed; "why, I have not seen her yet, I have not even heard her speak a single word."

"And what does that signify?" replied his father; "you will see her and hear her too, for that matter, quite often enough after you are once married. Come and see the house I have purchased for you."

This precipitation was by no means displeasing to Herodotus, excepting that his travels had instilled in him some desire to know his wife, and judge of her before he married her. At the same time, as he had now grown to years of discretion, he considered that his father might have consulted him before purchasing the house. Such ideas, however, were by no means indigenous to a Greek soil. In Halicarnassus, as at Athens, it would have been considered the height of indelicacy for a free maiden to have exhibited her face unveiled, excepting in a religious procession; and Herodotus had never chanced to have seen Phædra on these occasions. As to the house, Lyxes was a kind, but arbitrary father, and Herodotus felt that a remonstrance at the present moment would be rather ill-timed. He therefore accompanied Lyxes with a good grace, and found that his future dwelling was built almost exactly like his father's house, and included every arrangement and comfort that he could possibly have required; whilst a host of workmen were busily engaged in cleaning, furbishing, and furnishing the different chambers, so as to get the whole ready by the appointed time.

The next day Herodotus, and his father and mother, arrayed in festal attire, and accompanied by a few relatives and friends, proceeded to the house of Pisindelis and Artemisia, to celebrate the betrothal. This ceremony was absolutely indispensable to the complete validity of a marriage-contract. It was made by the father or guardian of the bride, and attended by the relatives of

both sides as witnesses. In the present case it was a mere matter of form, for the amount of dowry, and everything else connected with the marriage, had been previously settled by Lyxes and Artemisia, in whose hands Pisindelis, the father and natural guardian of the bride, was a mere cipher. Here, however, for the first time, Herodotus saw his future wife, and mightily was he impressed in her favour. She was pale, from want of exercise; but on the present occasion her countenance was flushed by the excitement of the ceremony and the presence of her intended husband for the first time. Her figure was tall and handsome; her eyes were beautiful but downcast; her expression was sweet and pleasing; her costume was rich and graceful; her feet and hands were exquisitely shaped; her long tresses of luxuriant hair were artfully braided; and, in short, Herodotus fell decidedly in love, and was very much inclined to startle the assembled company by clasping her in his arms.

Our readers who may be versed in the conventional modes of modern love-making must by no means deduce from our narrative that Herodotus was too fickle and susceptible to be a constant and devoted lover. A young man who had lived a pure and virtuous life until his thirty-second year, and who had been generally denied all social intercourse with ladies of his own age and rank, would naturally form an attachment to every fair face he saw; whilst at the same time the customs of Greece prevented his mingling freely in that society which would have deepened the impression, and rendered it lasting. The best father, and the best husband in modern days — he who loves his wife as the apple of his eye, and fervently believes that he never bestowed a thought upon another — might remember, if he could only recall the past in all its freshness, many a little scene, and many a little affair of the heart, which, if put upon paper, might be secreted

under the pillow of his eldest daughter, and admired as the most moving and sentimental of novels.

But to go back for a short period of twenty-three centuries. Herodotus was to be married on the fourth day of the month Gamelion, which partly corresponded to our January, and was considered by the Greeks to be the most auspicious and favourable month for the ceremony. The preliminary sacrifices to Zeus and Hera were all duly performed, and at last the wedding-day arrived, the day when Herodotus was to fetch his bride and conduct her to his new home.

Everything was ready in the house which Lyxes had purchased for his son. Here the marriage-feast was prepared, and numbers of slaves stood ready to receive their new lord and mistress. Lyxes and Dryo had left their own house to entertain the guests on this important occasion, the only feast to which ladies were invited as well as their husbands. The feast indeed was in the highest degree significant. Amongst the Greeks no civil or religious rite was connected with the celebration of marriage, excepting the betrothal and sacrifices already mentioned; and consequently no public record was kept of its solemnisation. The wedding-feast thus supplied the deficiency, and the guests were partly invited as witnesses of the marriage.

The day was bright and clear, and whilst the afternoon was wearing away Herodotus prepared to accompany the friend whom he had selected to be his bridesman to fetch away his bride. Our hero wore a long, soft chiton of fine Milesian wool, and over it an himation of dazzling whiteness; and the crimson thongs of his elegant half-shoes were fastened with clasps of gold. At nightfall they proceeded to the house of Artemisia in a richly decorated chariot, drawn by stately mules, and accompanied by Lyxes and a host of friends and attendants all in festal array. The door of the palace was profusely hung with

garlands; and when Herodotus and his bridesman and father dismounted and entered the gateway, they found that all Halicarnassus had turned out to see the procession which was shortly to emerge.

Phædra was already dressed in the most magnificent manner, and adorned with armlets and necklaces of gold and jewels. The bridal veil covered her features, as the old queen Artemisia led her forward, and delivered her into the hands of her expectant husband. She was duly escorted to the chariot, and tremblingly sat upon the couch, whilst Herodotus and his bridesman took their seats, one on each side of the veiled fair.

Then the venerable old queen Artemisia kindled the marriage-torch, and the crowd of attendants followed her example. The procession moved slowly off amid the sparkling of the lights, the music of the flutes, and the merry song of Hymenæos. On reaching the entrance to their new abode, a shower of sweetmeats and small coins were cast upon the happy pair, according to the ancient custom. They proceeded at once to the banqueting-hall, which was brilliantly lighted up for the festival. All the relations and connexions of the two noble families of the bridegroom and his bride were there present; the couches of the gentlemen on one side of the hall, and those of the ladies on the other. The praises of the happy pair were everywhere spoken, and the auspicious marriage-feast was celebrated with merriment and song. At last midnight approached, the company began to separate, the loud burden of the bridal song once more re-echoed through the halls, and never perhaps did the fair god Hymenæos hover over a brighter or happier union.

CHAP. XXXIX.

HALICARNASSUS, B. C. 453—448. LYDIAN HISTORY, ANTE 448 B. C.

FIVE YEARS OF HAPPINESS. — DEATH OF PISINDELIS. — PREPARATIONS FOR A JOURNEY TO SUSA. — HERODOTUS PROCEEDS TO SARDIS. — LYDIAN HISTORY. — CONQUESTS OF CRŒSUS. — STORY OF BIAS. — VISIT OF SOLON AT THE LYDIAN COURT. — WHO IS THE HAPPIEST OF MANKIND? — STORY OF TELLUS. — STORY OF CLEOBIS AND BION. — WISDOM OF SOLON. — CRŒSUS AFFLICTED BY THE AVENGING NEMESIS. — PURIFICATION OF ADRASTUS. — LOSS OF HIS SON ATYS. — PREPARES FOR WAR AGAINST CYRUS AND THE PERSIANS. — CRŒSUS CONSULTS THE ORACLES. — STORY OF THE PRESENT SENT BY THE SPARTANS. — ANECDOTE OF ALCMÆON. — HIS GOLDEN APPEARANCE BEFORE CRŒSUS. — WAR AGAINST PERSIA. — ADVICE OF SANDANIS. — PRODIGY OF SERPENTS. — SARDIS TAKEN BY CYRUS. — OVERTHROW OF THE LYDIAN POWER. — STORY OF CRŒSUS AND HIS DUMB SON. — CRŒSUS SAVED BY APOLLO FROM BEING SACRIFICED TO THE GODS. — HIS ADVICE TO CYRUS. — REPROACHES THE ORACLE AT DELPHI. — DISCOVERS HIS ERROR. — AFTER LIFE OF CRŒSUS.

FIVE years passed away, and Herodotus' cup of bliss seemed full to overflowing. His marriage had proved happy. The society of Phædra more than compensated for all the changing pleasures of travel. But he had one sorrow,—no children had blessed the union. In other respects, kind Hestia had smiled upon his domestic hearth. At the same time he was rapidly taking the place of his father as one of the most popular and able citizens in Halicarnassus. His words were always heard, and his counsel generally followed in the magisterial assemblies. He had won the confidence of Artemisia to an extraordinary degree. She regarded him with more affection than she regarded her own son the reigning king Pisindelis. She took him into her most secret councils, and

listened to him with attention, even when his democratic tendencies seemed most opposed to her aristocratic prejudices. Athens was at peace with Sparta, and at peace with Persia, as Lyxes had foretold. Athenian ideas dangerous to the interests of the throne were gaining ground in Halicarnassus. Artemisia had lost a large portion of her ancient energy; and as she saw that neither Pisindelis nor his son Lygdamis would ever be able to maintain themselves in the tyranny against a powerful democratic opposition, she was anxious to make some concessions and introduce some novelties which should gratify the craving anxiety of the people for political change, and at the same time increase the popularity of the royal house. Never for one moment had she dreamed of the ambitious designs of her old friend Lyxes.

One event had thrown a cloud upon the happiness of Herodotus. It was the death of his mother Dryo. The good old lady had desired to see a son born to Herodotus; but an illness had attacked her, and she had died in the arms of her new daughter Phædra. From that time Lyxes was an altered man. He became more ambitious than ever. He devoted his whole time to political schemes, and he even refused to share the house of Herodotus, in order that nothing might disturb him in the arrangement of his plans.

One morning Lyxes met Herodotus in the agora, evidently bearing news of unusual importance, and invited his son to his house.

"I have it on good authority," said the father, directly he entered the portico which ran round the court of the andronitis, "that Pisindelis cannot live two days. His son Lygdamis, who is barely nineteen, will then succeed to the government of the city and kingdom. Artemisia has long expected her son's death, and arranged that in case this should happen before her grandson Lygdamis reached the age of twenty-two, I am to be appointed his

guardian. Of course, since the peace with Persia, the satrap could not interfere with the government of Halicarnassus; and if a democratic revolution were to break out, he would not attempt to put it down. He knows, however, how weak and feeble Lygdamis is, and he is convinced that Halicarnassus should not be entrusted to such hands. In short, I am determined to get the sovereignty for myself, and for you after me; and this I can easily manage if you will undertake a mission to Susa. The satrap has given me letters for you to the necessary officers at the Persian court; and I have drawn up a plan of instructions which you can examine at your leisure. I did not wish to trouble you with these matters before you had obtained the confidence of the democratic party. Take the instructions with you, and let me see you again as soon as possible after the death of Pisindelis. Of course you will not whisper a word to your wife; and for the present I must be as much as possible in communication with the queen. Carry the scrolls under your vest, they will explain everything."

Lyxes was always thus short and abrupt in matters of business requiring immediate action; and Herodotus walked home almost confused at the new prospect thus suddenly opened before him. A visit to Susa had always been the object of his desire; but the great capital of the Persian empire was at least a three months' journey off; and from what he knew of previous envoys who had proceeded there, he might be detained two or three years from his wife and home. On finding himself alone in his own chamber, he read through his father's writings, and was soon struck with surprise and admiration at the daring and brilliant schemes of Lyxes. To establish an empire which should rival that of the Samian Polycrates; to command the protection of Persia, and the adherence of the democracy; to unite Asiatic Greece into a grand confederacy which should compete with that of Athens

for the sovereignty of the Ægean: such were the gigantic plans which had been developed in the apparently idle brain of Lyxes. The scroll of instructions contained most admirable directions for obtaining from the great king the transfer of the sovereignty from Lygdamis to Lyxes; and also a careful list of the principal persons in the Persian court who were to be propitiated by Herodotus during his mission. Many hours passed before he could even master the details, much less take a general view of the comprehensive schemes thus unfolded to his mental vision.

In a few days the shade of Pisindelis had passed into the under world. Lygdamis was proclaimed his successor in the sovereignty, and Lyxes was appointed guardian to the young monarch. The democratic party were taken by surprise, but were by no means dissatisfied with the new arrangements. Lyxes proposed to the old queen that a trusty envoy should at once be dispatched, not to the nearest satrap, but to the court of Susa, to acquaint the great king with the new arrangements. Artemisia easily acquiesced, and Herodotus was named for the purpose; and after long and anxious consideration our hero was at last persuaded to leave his wife under the care of his father, and undertake the all-important mission.

In the summer of B. C. 448 Herodotus sailed from Halicarnassus to Ephesus, which was only a three days' voyage off; and from thence proceeded to Sardis, in order to join an escort which was about to conduct the usual yearly tribute from the satrap of Lydia to the great king.

Sardis was the capital of Lydia, and the most luxurious city of western Asia Minor. In the times of Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar she had been the capital of the independent kingdom of Lydia. Crœsus, who reigned about a century before the time of Herodotus, had extended his conquests over nearly the whole of Asia Minor, from the shore of the Ægean to the banks of the river

Halys. But this brilliant career was cut short by the arms of Cyrus. The empire of Lydia was swallowed up in that of Persia, and her mightiest sovereign passed his latter days in the train of his conquerors.

The history of Crœsus was of course well known to Herodotus; but we cannot leave Sardis without running over the principal events which belonged to so chequered a life. He was the fifth king of the dynasty of the Mermnadæ, which had retained possession of the sovereignty for about a century and a half previously to his accession. He ascended the throne of Lydia in the year B. C. 560, or about ten years before the time when the hardy mountaineers of Persia rushed from their bleak hills under the leadership of Cyrus, overthrew the kingdom of the Medes, and established the great Persian empire.

Crœsus was thirty-five years of age when he succeeded to the kingdom; and before his fiftieth year he had subdued nearly all the tribes of Asia Minor as far as the Halys, and conquered all the Greek cities on the coast—those of the Æolians, Ionians, and Dorians—and forced them to pay him tribute. He even began to build dockyards for the construction of war-ships, which should enable him to conquer the Greek islands of the Ægean; but this scheme was stopped by an Ionian named Bias, who was afterwards reckoned amongst the seven wise men. Bias having on one occasion made a journey from his native city of Priene to the Lydian capital, was met by Crœsus, and asked if he brought any news from Greece. Bias replied, "O king, the Greeks in the islands are raising a large body of cavalry in order to make war upon you, and ravage the plain of Sardis." Crœsus, knowing that his cavalry was the finest in Western Asia, at once cried out, "May the gods have indeed put it into the heads of the islanders to attack us with their horse; we could not possibly desire a better thing." Then said Bias, "You wish, O king, that the Greek islanders

should attack you on horseback, and not without reason. But they, on their part, having heard of your ship-building, are far more anxious that you should attack them on sea, that they may then obtain revenge for the subjection of their continental brethren." This reproof is said to have had such an effect upon Crœsus, that he gave up the idea of building a fleet, and made a friendly alliance with the islanders.

Lydia had now reached its highest pitch of prosperity. Crœsus was in friendly alliance with Amasis, king of Egypt, on one side, and with Belshazzar, king of Babylon, on the other, and was likewise at peace with the rest of mankind. Sardis had become one of the most celebrated cities of western Asia Minor, and was visited by many of the philosophers of Greece, who were always well entertained at the court of the successful and magnificent monarch. Amongst others, Solon, the great lawgiver of Athens, made his appearance, and was hospitably received by Crœsus. On the third or fourth day of his stay, some of the royal attendants conducted him, by the king's command, all over the imperial treasury, and exhibited to the sage all its costly contents. When Solon had carefully examined everything, and returned again to the king's presence, Crœsus asked him the following question: "My Athenian guest," he said, "we have long heard of your wisdom and your extensive travels, and how that you have visited most countries for the sole purpose of philosophic observation. I am therefore desirous of knowing who is the most happy man whom you have ever seen?" Crœsus hoped that the riches which Solon had recently beheld would induce him to declare that the king of Lydia was the happiest of mankind. Solon, however, who always spoke the truth freely, and never stooped to flattery, at once replied, "Tellus the Athenian." Crœsus was astonished, and eagerly asked why he believed Tellus to have been the happiest of mortals. "Because," said

Solon, "Tellus, in the first place, lived in a well-governed commonwealth; he had sons who were good and virtuous; he saw children born to them all, and all surviving; and, lastly, when he had lived as happily as the condition of human affairs will permit, he died the most glorious of deaths; for, during an engagement between Athens and Eleusis, he marched to the assistance of his countrymen, put the enemy to flight, and fell nobly in the hour of victory; and the citizens of Athens buried him at the public charge on the field of battle, and paid him the honours of a hero. Such was the man whom I believe to be the happiest of mankind."

When Crœsus heard this account of so illustrious a mortal, he was willing to waive his own claims to being the happiest of men, but he still hoped for a second place. Accordingly he asked Solon to name the man who should be placed next to Tellus. The sage replied, "The men to whom I should adjudge the second place of felicity are the two youths Cleobis and Bion. They were both citizens of Argos, possessed an ample fortune, and were endowed with such strength of body, that they were both victors in the public games. Moreover, the following story is told concerning them. On one occasion, when the Argives were celebrating a festival to the goddess Hera, it was necessary that the mother of the two youths should be drawn to the great temple of Hera in a chariot. The oxen, however, were not brought from the field in time, and the brothers were afraid that their mother would be too late; and accordingly they yoked themselves to the chariot and drew it to the holy precinct, which was nearly six miles off. Having performed this feat in sight of all the assembled multitude, a most happy termination was put to their lives; and thus the deity clearly showed that it is better for a man to die than to live. Whilst the men of Argos were admiring the strength of the youths, and the women were blessing the mother for being the

parent of such sons, the mother herself, transported with joy on account of the action and its renown, entered the temple and prayed before the holy image that the goddess Hera would grant to Cleobis and Bion the greatest blessing man could receive. After this prayer, and when the mother and her sons had offered their sacrifices and partaken of the feast, the two youths fell asleep in the temple itself and never woke again; and the Argives, in commemoration of their piety, caused their statues to be made and dedicated to Apollo in the temple at Delphi."

Crœsus was now in a rage. He cried out, "My Athenian friend, do you then pass such a slight upon my happy position as to think me of less value than private men?" But Solon answered as follows: "Crœsus, you inquire of me concerning human affairs, and I know that the divine Nemesis is always jealous of man's happiness, and delights in confounding him in the midst of his greatest prosperity; and I know, too, that in the lapse of years men are constrained to see many things that they would not willingly see, and to suffer many things that they would not willingly suffer. Now, the ordinary term of man's life is threescore years and ten, and of all the thousands of days in those seventy years, not one day will produce the same events as another. Thus, O Crœsus, man is altogether the sport of fortune. You appear to be the master of immense treasures and the king of many nations, but I cannot judge of the happiness of your life until I hear how your life has terminated. The richest of men is not more happy than he who has a sufficiency for a day, unless good fortune attends him to the grave, and he ends his life surrounded by prosperity. Many men abound in wealth and are yet unhappy; others, again, who have only a moderate competency are fortunate. The wealthy man, indeed, is better able to gratify his desires and to bear the blow of adversity. But the

simply fortunate man is happier still; he may not be able to satisfy every craving or bear up against adversity, but his good fortune will of itself ward off these evils; he enjoys the full use of his limbs, he is free from disease or misfortune, he possesses a handsome form and virtuous children; and if, in addition to all these blessings, he ends his life well, he is the man who may be justly ranked amongst the happiest of mortals; but until his earthly career is closed we ought to suspend our judgment, and not pronounce him happy, but fortunate. But we must bear in mind that no single man ever yet possessed all these advantages. As no one country possesses everything that can be required, but produces some good things and is in need of others, and as that which affords the most is necessarily the best, so is it with human life. No man possesses every earthly blessing; some he has and others he needs. He who has constantly enjoyed the greatest and best gifts of fortune, and who ends his life in tranquillity, that man, O King, deserves, in my judgment, the credit of having been really happy. We, indeed, ought to consider the end of all things, and how our lives will terminate; for the divine Nemesis having shown a glimpse of happiness to many, has at last utterly overthrown them and plunged them into the lowest adversity."

Such was the sermon which Solon is said to have preached to the rich and powerful sovereign of Lydia; but the puffed-up oriental despot could not easily swallow the affront to his pride. He dismissed Solon with contempt, and without conferring on him the slightest favour; regarding him as an ignorant fool, who overlooked prosperity, and who bade men look to the termination of their lives when their prosperity could afford them no further happiness.

But soon after the departure of Solon the ever-jealous, ever-equalising Nemesis visited the court of that monarch

who had arrogantly presumed himself to be the happiest of mankind. Crœsus was troubled by a dream, which foretold the misfortunes that were about to befall him. He had two sons, one of whom was perfectly dumb, whilst the other, named Atys, surpassed every young man of his age in talent and accomplishments. Now the dream intimated to Crœsus that this favoured and favourite son Atys would be slain by an iron weapon; and it made such an impression upon his mind that he used every effort to ward off the stroke of fate. He provided a wife for Atys; he took him from the command of the army; he removed all the spears, lances, and other weapons which were hanging on the walls of the men's apartments in the royal palace, lest they should fall on the head of his son; and for the future the arms were laid up in private chambers.

Whilst Crœsus was busily occupied in celebrating the nuptials of Atys, a Phrygian of royal birth, named Adrastus, arrived at Sardis. Adrastus was at that time oppressed by misfortune; his hands were polluted, for he had been guilty of involuntary homicide; and accordingly he came to the royal palace to seek to obtain purification, according to the custom of the country. The rites of purification were the same in Lydia as in Greece. The man who had been guilty of taking away another's life by accident was a proper subject for such a purification. Until its performance it was believed that the blood of the slain man clave to the hand of the slayer, and brought a curse both upon him and upon all with whom he might converse; but after the purification he was enabled to hold intercourse with his fellow man, and seek for a restoration to his civil rights. Thus it was that Adrastus fled from Phrygia to Sardis, and applied to Crœsus for protection, not as an ordinary suppliant, but as one seeking purification. Uttering no words, as conversation would convey the contagion of his guilt, he

entered the royal palace, carrying an olive branch tied with a fillet of wool, and took up his station at the hearth. Crœsus took compassion on the fugitive stranger. Food was served up to the silent guest on a separate table, and then Crœsus ordered the necessary preparations to be made for purifying him from the stain of blood. Adrastus stood upon the fleece of a black ram. A jet of blood from a young sucking pig was made to fall upon his hand, and this was washed off into the fleece by a stream of water poured upon it; and when the stain of bloodguiltiness had been thus removed, the fleece with the blood on it was buried in the earth.

After the performance of these rites, Crœsus was enabled to speak to the stranger, and learned for the first time his true name and lineage, and that he had unwittingly slain his brother, and been banished by his father, and deprived of all his possessions in consequence. Crœsus then received him as a constant guest in the palace, and from that time Adrastus was regarded as a retainer of the royal house.

Whilst these events were taking place, some Mysian envoys arrived at Sardis, with the intelligence that a monstrous boar, whom no one could approach, was ravaging the Mysian territory in the northern quarter of the Lydian empire. They told Crœsus that they had endeavoured but in vain to take the ferocious and enormous animal; and they begged him to send his son Atys, with some chosen youths and dogs, who would be able to expel the boar from their country. Crœsus replied that he could not send his son, who had only been recently married, but that he would despatch chosen Lydians and the whole hunting train belonging to the royal house, with orders to assist the Mysians with their best endeavours until they should succeed in driving out the monster. The Mysian envoys were content with this promise; but Atys having heard of the request and the refusal, entered his

father's presence, and complained that he was excluded both from war and hunting, and that the Lydians would soon begin to look coldly upon him, and even his newly married wife would regard him as a coward. He therefore begged his father either to permit him to hunt the boar, or else to explain the reasons of his refusal. Crœsus then related his dream that his son would be short-lived, and would die by the point of an iron weapon. Atys at once explained that the iron weapon in the dream could not possibly refer to the sharp tusk of the boar, which was the only thing to be dreaded. Crœsus accordingly permitted Atys to join the hunt, and persuaded Adrastus to accompany him as his guardian. Adrastus was very much disinclined, in his unfortunate circumstances, to take any part in the enterprise, but could not refuse the request of his protector without being guilty of great ingratitude. The hunting party duly assembled on the mountain in Mysia named Olympus, and having found the terrible boar, began to encircle him and hurl their javelins from all sides. Then it was that the javelin of Adrastus missed the boar and killed the son of Crœsus, and thus fulfilled the warning of the dream.

The melancholy news of his son's death soon reached the ears of Crœsus. He was distressed beyond all measure, and his grief was the more bitter because Atys had fallen by the hand of one whom he had himself purified from the stain of bloodguiltiness. In the vehemence of his lamentations he invoked Zeus the expiator, attesting what he had suffered by the Phrygian stranger. He likewise invoked the same deity as the god of hospitality, because, by receiving a stranger into his palace, he had unawares fostered the murderer of his son; and again as the god of private friendship, because, having sent Adrastus to be the guardian of Atys, he had found the man on whom he most relied to be his greatest enemy. Shortly afterwards a sad procession of Lydians approached with

the corpse of the unfortunate prince, and followed by the anguish-stricken murderer. The latter advanced before the corpse, and at once delivered himself up to the weeping father, stretching forth his hands, and begging that he might be killed over the dead body of his victim; and then he publicly narrated his misfortunes, and declared how, in addition to his former involuntary crime, he had now destroyed the son of his purifier, and deserved to live no longer. Crœsus pitied and pardoned Adrastus in the midst of his own great sorrow, and assured him that he was not the author of the misfortune, but that deity, whoever it was, which had sent the dream. The king then buried his beloved son with all the honours due to his distinguished birth; but the brokenhearted Adrastus approached the spot in the silence of the night, and slew himself upon the prince's tomb.

Crœsus was after awhile aroused from his tears by the threatening appearance in Asia of a new and formidable power. Cyrus, a Persian chieftain, had revolted against Astyages, the king of Media, and completely overthrown the Median empire, and established the Persian supremacy in Central Asia. Astyages was in alliance with Crœsus, and was likewise his brother-in-law. In an old war between Astyages and Alyattes, the father of Crœsus, concerning some Scythian refugees, Syennesis, king of Cilicia, and the celebrated Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had arbitrated between the combatants; and not only was a satisfactory treaty concluded between the two powers of Lydia and Media, but Alyattes was persuaded to give his daughter Aryenis, the sister of Crœsus, in marriage to his old enemy Astyages.

Crœsus was therefore strongly inclined, partly by the hope of greater conquests, and partly from a desire to avenge his brother-in-law Astyages, to enter the lists against the Persian chieftain. We have already told the story of his sending to consult the most celebrated oracles

in the ancient world for the purpose of inquiring whether he should be successful against Cyrus, and whether it would be advisable to form an alliance with any other nation before commencing the war. He first discovered, by a preliminary test, that the oracle of the god Apollo at Delphi and that of the hero Amphiaraus near Thebes were the most truthful of all; and accordingly he consulted those two oracles, and was told by both that if he made war on the Persians he would destroy a mighty empire, and that he could not do better than form an alliance with the most powerful of the Greeks. Crœsus was delighted with these replies, and having ascertained that the Spartans were the most powerful people in Hellas, he sent ambassadors to request their alliance. The Spartans had already heard the news from Delphi concerning the replies given to Crœsus, and were gratified by the coming of the Lydian envoys. Indeed they had previously received great favours from Crœsus. When they had sent to Sardis to purchase the gold for the statue of Apollo which was subsequently erected on mount Thornax, the Lydian king had refused to take any money, but freely presented them with a sufficiency of the precious metal. They therefore eagerly accepted his offer of alliance, and promised to be ready at his summons. They likewise made an immense brazen vessel, covered all over with figures, and capable of holding 2400 gallons, and sent it as a present to Crœsus. The present, however, never got further than Samos. The Spartans who carried it declared that they were attacked by some Samian pirates, and robbed of the vessel. The Samians, on the other hand, declared that the Spartans themselves were the delinquents; for that when they reached the island they found that they were too late, that Sardis was taken by the Persians, and that Crœsus was in the hands of the enemy. Accordingly they sold the vessel in Samos, and some Samians bought it and dedicated it in the great temple

of Hera. The Spartans, on returning to Sparta, invented the story of the pirates and the robbery in order to account for the absence of the vessel.

But to return to our story. Crœsus was so determined to be quite safe that he sent a third time to Delphi to ask whether he himself should be long in the enjoyment of his kingdom. The reply of the Pythoness was as follows: —

> "When thou shalt see a mule reign o'er the Mede,
> Then over Hermus, tender Lydian, speed;
> Nor of a coward's name take thought or heed."

With this answer Crœsus was more delighted than ever; for he thought that a mule could never be king of the Medes, and consequently that neither he nor his posterity could ever be deprived of the kingdom. At the same time he heard that his envoys to Delphi had been greatly assisted by Alcmæon, the son of Megacles. Accordingly, he sent for Alcmæon to Sardis, and generously ordered that he should be conducted to the royal treasury, and allowed to take away as much gold as he could carry on his person. Alcmæon of course made every effort to carry off as much gold as possible. He put on garments with immense folds, and especially drew on his legs a pair of the widest boots he could find. On entering the treasury, he concentrated his energies upon an immense heap of gold-dust. He first stuffed round his legs as much gold as the boots would carry. He next filled all his garments with the precious commodity, and finally covered his hair, and crammed his mouth with heaps of gold-dust. In this extraordinary plight, and laboriously dragging his boots after him, he was conducted from the treasury once again into the royal presence, so swollen all over, that he could scarcely stand, and so stuffed in the cheeks with mouthfuls of glittering dust, that he was totally unable to utter a word. The strange appearance of such a ridiculous figure was enough to throw the whole

court into convulsions; but when Alcmæon endeavoured to make obeisance, and ejaculate his thanks, not a single spectator could contain himself. The princes and courtiers, and even the crowd of attendants, burst out into roars of laughter; the king himself laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks; whilst shrieks of merriment even arose from the royal ladies who witnessed the golden apparition from behind the screen. At last, when gravity was somewhat restored, Crœsus dismissed Alcmæon with other presents of almost equal value, which proved indeed the origin of the great riches of the celebrated family of the Alcmæonids.

Crœsus at last commenced the war against the newly risen Persian power, without the assistance of his allies. Sandanis, a wise Lydian, vainly endeavoured to dissuade him by the following advice. "O king!" said the sage, "you are about to make war against a people who wear garments of leather, who inhabit a barren country, who live not upon what they like but upon what they can get, who rarely drink wine and are obliged to drink water, who have no figs to eat, nor anything that is pleasant to the taste. Now, if you conquer them, you can take nothing from them, for they have nothing. If, on the other hand, you should be conquered, consider what good things you will lose; and when they have once tasted of our luxuries, they will never be driven away from them. As for myself, I thank the gods that they have not inspired the Persians with a desire of conquering the Lydians."

Crœsus, however, refused to be persuaded by such reasoning. He marched his army towards the east, and passed over the river Halys into Cappadocia. Some people said that he crossed by bridges; others, however, said the bridges were not then in existence, but that Thales of Miletus made the river fordable by carrying

off the waters through a semicircular canal, which by his direction was dug round the rear of the camp.

Meantime Cyrus was marching to meet him. The Persian chieftain sent heralds in advance to persuade the Ionians to revolt from the Lydian supremacy, but the Ionians refused. The Lydians and Persians made a trial of each other's strength on the plains of Pteria. An obstinate battle was fought, in which many fell on both sides, but neither party could claim the victory.

Crœsus attributed his want of success to the smallness of his army, as his forces were inferior in numbers to those of Cyrus. Accordingly he marched back to Sardis, and summoned his confederates, the Spartans, and also his other allies, Amasis, king of Egypt, and Belshazzar, king of Babylon, to come to his assistance in the following spring. Meantime, he disbanded his army which had fought the Persians, and which consisted entirely of mercenaries; for he did not suppose for a moment that Cyrus, who had suffered so much from such an inferior force, would venture to advance upon Sardis. Shortly afterwards, however, he was astonished by a most alarming portent. The suburbs of Sardis were suddenly filled with serpents; and when they appeared, the horses forsook the pastures, and hastened to devour the reptiles. Crœsus supposed that this visitation was some supernatural prodigy, and sent to consult the college of diviners, resident at Telmessus, respecting its meaning. The Telmessians interpreted it as follows: "The serpent is a son of the earth, but the horse is an enemy and a foreigner. Crœsus must therefore expect a foreign army to invade his country, and subdue the natives." This interpretation, however, did not reach Sardis until the whole was accomplished.

Meantime Cyrus was acquainted with the return of Crœsus to Sardis, and likewise heard of his intention to disband his army of mercenaries. He therefore decided

upon advancing upon Sardis with all speed, before the Lydian forces could be again assembled. So rapidly did he execute this long march that he was the first to carry the news of his own invasion. Crœsus was taken completely by surprise. Nevertheless he drew out his Lydians in order of battle, and at that time the Lydians were the most warlike and valiant people in Asia. The Lydian forces, consisting entirely of cavalry armed with long lances, took up a position in the plain before Sardis. Cyrus was afraid of the cavalry, but adopted the following expedient. Horses which are unaccustomed to the sight of camels cannot endure either the sight or the smell of the beast. Cyrus, therefore, collected all the camels which followed his army with provisions and baggage, and taking off their burdens, he mounted them with men equipped in cavalry accoutrements. The camels he placed in his van, his infantry behind the camels, and his cavalry in the rear behind the infantry. He then gave orders to his whole army to kill as many Lydians as possible, but, under any circumstances, to take Crœsus alive. An obstinate battle ensued. The Lydian horses wheeled round at the sight of the Persian camels; but still the Lydians leaped from their horses, and boldly engaged with the enemy on foot. At last, after great numbers had fallen on both sides, the Lydians were put to flight, and took refuge in Sardis.

Crœsus and his Lydians were now shut up within the city walls. Cyrus immediately commenced the siege of Sardis, whilst Crœsus sent off messengers to summon his allies with all speed. Meantime the fortifications of Sardis, which were to all appearance impregnable, defied every attack of the besiegers. On the fourteenth day of the siege, Cyrus proclaimed a liberal reward to the first man who should mount the wall; but though numbers made the attempt, yet none could succeed. Every part of the citadel was likewise well guarded by the Lydians,

excepting on one side, which was so precipitous and impracticable, that it was considered to be altogether unassailable. A Persian soldier, however, named Hyrœades, had perceived a Lydian drop his helmet down the steep, and then descend and fetch it up again. Hyrœades accordingly carefully noticed the way in which he both descended and ascended, and on the fourteenth day scaled the height himself, followed by numerous others. Thus Sardis was taken, and the whole city given up to plunder.

Meantime the following strange incidents happened to Crœsus. We have already mentioned his dumb son. Now, in the time of his prosperity, Crœsus had tried every expedient to relieve the unfortunate prince, and, amongst other things, had sent to consult the oracle at Delphi; upon which the Pythoness had given the following answer:—

> "O foolish king of Lydia, do not seek
> To hear thy son within thy palace speak!
> Better for thee that pleasure to forego—
> The day he speaks will be a day of woe."

When the city was taken, one of the Persians, not knowing Crœsus, was about to kill him; and the king himself had been rendered so completely prostrate by his recent misfortunes, that he made no effort to avoid the blow. At the very moment, however, that the Persian was advancing to strike, this very dumb son burst into speech, and cried, "Man, kill not Crœsus." These words saved the king; but they were the very first which the prince had uttered, and from that time he retained the power of his speech.

The Persians took Sardis, and made the Lydian king prisoner in the fourteenth day of the siege and the fourteenth year of the reign of Crœsus. Cyrus then ordered an immense pile to be erected, and prepared to offer Crœsus and fourteen young Lydians as a sacrifice to some Persian deity. As the unhappy king stood upon the pile,

he could not help remembering the words of Solon, "that no man, whilst still alive, could be justly pronounced happy;" and, after a long silence, he groaned aloud, and thrice pronounced the name of the Athenian sage. Cyrus, hearing him speak, ordered the interpreters to ask him who it was that he invoked. Crœsus did not reply for some time; but at last told them of Solon, and repeated the discourse which the sage had delivered to him in the midst of his highest prosperity. It was said that when the interpreters had repeated the whole to Cyrus, the Persian chieftain remembered that he was about to burn a man who had been in no way inferior to himself in prosperity, and therefore gave orders that the fire, which had been already kindled, should be immediately extinguished. According to a Lydian tradition, the Persians were unable to master the flames; upon which Crœsus invoked Apollo with a loud voice, and besought the god, if any of his offerings at Delphi had found favour in his eyes, that he would deign to deliver his suppliant in the present hour of danger. It was likewise reported that Apollo heard and answered the prayer. Clouds were said to have suddenly gathered in the air, and a heavy rain to have fallen on the pile and extinguished the flames. Cyrus, seeing that Crœsus was thus beloved by the gods, asked him, when he had descended from the pile, what was his reason for marching to invade the Persian territory. Crœsus replied: "O king, I have done this for your good, but to my own injury. The god of the Greeks who encouraged me is the cause of all. No man is so utterly void of understanding not to prefer peace to war; for in peace children bury their fathers; but in war fathers bury their children. But I suppose it pleased the gods that things should be as they are."

Cyrus then placed Crœsus by his side, and showed him great respect. Presently, Crœsus seeing the Persians busily engaged in sacking the city, said to the Persian

chieftain, "Upon what, O King, is that vast crowd so actively employed?" Cyrus answered, "They are sacking your city and plundering your riches." "Not so," said Crœsus; "they are not plundering my riches, but yours." Cyrus was at once struck with the remark, and ordered all present to withdraw, excepting his captive. He then asked Crœsus what had better be done under the circumstances. Crœsus answered as follows: "The Persians, though overbearing by nature, are at present poor. If you permit them to plunder and possess great riches, you may expect that he who acquires the greatest possessions will be ready to rebel. I would therefore suggest the following plan. Place some of your body guard as sentinels at every gate, with orders to take the booty from every one who goes out, and acquaint them that the tenth must of necessity be given to the gods. Thus you will not incur the odium of taking away their property, and they, acknowledging your intention to be just, will readily obey."

Cyrus approved highly of this suggestion, and ordered it to be carried into effect, and then requested Crœsus to ask for any boon he desired. The Lydian king, in reply, begged permission to send his fetters to Apollo at Delphi, and to ask the god whether it was his custom to deceive those who had deserved well of him. Cyrus gave his consent, and Lydian envoys were sent to Delphi bearing the fetters and the message, upon which the Pythoness made the following reply: "The god cannot avert the decrees of fate, but he saved the life of Crœsus, and delayed the capture of Sardis for the space of three years." As to the prediction of the oracle, Crœsus has no right to complain. Apollo foretold that if he went to war with the Persians he would subvert a great empire; and if he wished to be truly informed he ought to have sent again and inquired whether the

oracle meant the Lydian or the Persian empire. Neither when he last consulted the oracle did he comprehend the prophecy respecting the mule. That mule was Cyrus, who was born of parents of different nations, whose mother was the superior, and whose father was the inferior, whose mother was a Mede and whose father was a Persian." When Crœsus received this answer he acknowledged that the fault was his own, and that it was not to be attributed to the god with the silver bow.

The after life of Crœsus can be summed up in a few words. He chiefly appears in the character of a wise counsellor in the train of Cyrus and his successor Cambyses. Thus he advised Cyrus to strengthen his authority over the warlike Lydians by rendering them luxurious and effeminate. He made some useful suggestions, as we have already seen, in the expedition of Cyrus against the Massagetans. He uttered a celebrated compliment to Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, in which he declared that Cambyses was not to be compared to Cyrus, inasmuch as he had not so good a son to leave behind him. When, however, Cambyses went mad in Egypt, and Crœsus thought fit to admonish him, the Lydian king narrowly escaped with his life. Cambyses first taunted him with not having preserved his kingdom, and then shot an arrow at him. Crœsus fled uninjured, but the Persian king ordered his attendants to seize him and put him to death. The latter, knowing the temper of their royal master, took Crœsus prisoner but preserved him alive, thinking that if Cambyses should repent his rash command they would be rewarded for having preserved their captive alive, but that if he should not repent, then they might still put the Lydian king to death. Not long afterwards Cambyses did in reality regret that he should have ordered the execution of Crœsus, and the attendants then acquainted him that they had saved their prisoner. Cambyses, however,

said, "I am rejoiced that Crœsus is still alive, but those who saved him contrary to my commands shall be put to death;" and he immediately ordered the attendants to be executed. Crœsus probably died not long afterwards, for he does not again appear upon the page of history.

CHAP. XL.

SARDIS AND BABYLON, B.C. 448—447.

HOW THE LYDIANS BECAME LUXURIOUS.—LYDIAN REVOLT FROM CYRUS.—ADVICE OF CRŒSUS.—WARLIKE SPIRIT OF LYDIA EFFECTUALLY DESTROYED.—STORY OF THE ARREST OF PACTYAS.—STORY OF ARISTODICUS AND THE ORACLE OF BRANCHIDÆ.—DESCRIPTION OF SARDIS.—CUSTOMS OF THE LYDIANS.—THEIR INVENTIONS.—IMMENSE TUMULUS OF ALYATTES.—MONUMENT OF SESOSTRIS.—ROYAL ROAD TO SUSA.—PERSIAN SYSTEM OF POST.—VOYAGE DOWN THE RIVER EUPHRATES TO BABYLON.—SINGULAR MAKE OF THE ARMENIAN BOATS.—WONDERFUL HARVESTS OF BABYLONIA.—MAGNIFICENCE AND LUXURY OF BABYLON.—APPEARANCE OF THE CITY AND PEOPLE.—STUPENDOUS WALLS AND BRAZEN GATES.—MOVEABLE BRIDGES OVER THE EUPHRATES.—ROYAL PALACE OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR.—IMMENSE TEMPLE OF BELUS.—BIRS NIMROUD.—TOWER OF BABEL.—SEPULCHRE OF NITOCRIS.—SINGULAR MATRIMONIAL AUCTIONS.

AFTER the Persian conquest, the Lydians were no longer the same brave and hardy horsemen who had obtained for Crœsus the empire of Asia Minor. They became luxurious and effeminate; and this decline in the national character was said to have been intentionally brought about by the direct policy of Cyrus.

After the capture of Sardis, the great Persian conqueror sent one of his generals to subdue the Asiatic Greeks, and then retraced his march towards the banks of the Euphrates for the purpose of besieging the great city of Babylon. Before, however, he left the Lydian territory, he entrusted the government of Sardis to one Tabalus, a Persian, and appointed Pactyas, a Lydian, to bring away all the gold from the treasury of Crœsus and from the coffers of the private citizens. Pactyas proved unfaithful to his charge. Almost immediately after

Cyrus had fairly left Sardis, Pactyas prevailed on the Lydians to revolt against the Persian governor Tabalus, and then hurried off to the sea-coast with all the gold in his possession, and commenced hiring mercenaries, and likewise persuaded many of the inhabitants to join in the insurrection. By these means he raised a considerable army, and, marching against Sardis, he besieged Tabalus, and shut him up in the citadel.

The news arrested Cyrus in the midst of his march, and he immediately took the Lydian king into his counsels. "O Crœsus," he said, "what will be the end of these things? The Lydians will never cease to be a trouble both to me and to themselves. I am almost inclined to think that it would be best to reduce them to slavery. I seem to have killed the father and spared the children; for I am carrying away you who have been more than a father to the Lydians, and have intrusted the city to the Lydians themselves; and now, forsooth, I am wondering at their rebellion." Crœsus was afraid lest Cyrus should utterly destroy Sardis. He therefore spoke to the Persian king as follows: "Sire, you have but too much reason for what you say; but do not give full vent to your anger, nor utterly destroy an ancient city which is equally innocent of the former invasion of your dominions and of the present revolt. For of the invasion I alone am guilty, and now bear the punishment; and, as regards the revolt, Pactyas alone is the culprit, and therefore let him pay the penalty. But pardon the Lydians, I pray you, and oblige them to observe the following regulations, which will prevent their attempting any revolt for the future. Issue strict orders that no Lydian be permitted to retain any weapons of war in his possession at any time. Enjoin them all to wear chitons under their himations and buskins on their feet. Require them to teach their sons to play on the cithara, to strike the lyre, and to become mere idle shopkeepers and retail dealers.

Then you will see them become women instead of men, and you need have no further fear of their revolting." Cyrus fully approved of this line of policy, and sent Mazares, a Mede, with orders to carry it into effect, but to enslave all the Lydians who had followed Pactyas, and to take Pactyas alive.

Meantime Pactyas heard that an army under Mazares was marching against him, and fled in the utmost consternation to the Ionian city of Cyme. Mazares retook Sardis without difficulty, and despatched messengers to require the Cymæans to deliver up Pactyas. The Cymæans immediately sent off envoys to the oracle of Branchidæ, to ask what course they should pursue respecting Pactyas, which would be most pleasing to the gods. The reply of the god was, that they should deliver up Pactyas to the Persians. The Cymæans accordingly were about to give up the refugee, when a citizen of high repute, named Aristodicus, persuaded them to wait a little while; for he distrusted the oracle, and was suspicious also of the good faith of the envoys. Other envoys, among whom was Aristodicus himself, were then sent to inquire a second time concerning Pactyas. On reaching the sanctuary, Aristodicus put the question to the oracle in the name of all the others, and in the following words: "Pactyas, a Lydian, has come to us as a suppliant, to avoid a violent death at the hands of the Persians. The Persians now demand him, and require the citizens of Cyme to deliver him up. We, however, though we dread the Persian power, have not dared to surrender the suppliant until thou hast plainly declared unto us what we ought to do." The oracle still gave the same answer as before, and commanded them to surrender Pactyas to the Persians. Aristodicus then deliberately walked round the temple and took away the sparrows and other birds that had built nests under the sanctuary. Immediately a voice issued from the sacred fane, and

cried out, "O most impious of men! dost thou dare to drag my suppliants from my temple?" Aristodicus replied: "Art thou then so careful to protect thy own suppliants, and yet commandest the Cymæans to deliver up theirs?" Then the oracle cried: "Yes, I bid you do so, that, having acted impiously, ye may the sooner perish, and never come and consult the oracle again about the delivering up of suppliants."

When this last answer was carried to Cyme, the citizens determined neither to bring destruction upon themselves by giving up Pactyas, nor to subject themselves to a siege by protecting him, and accordingly sent him away to the city of Mitylene, in the island of Lesbos. The citizens of Mitylene were by no means so fearful of offending the gods as those of Cyme; for when Mazares sent to require them to deliver up Pactyas, they prepared to do so upon receipt of a certain sum of money. The Cymæans, however, heard of these atrocious negotiations, and at once despatched a vessel to Mitylene, and transferred Pactyas to the island of Chios. But the Chians were equally as unscrupulous as the Mitylenæans. They offered to deliver up the suppliant to the Persians in exchange for a small territory on the mainland called Atarneus. Mazares readily agreed to the barter, and the Chians tore Pactyas by violence from the sanctuary of Athena, and gave him up to the Persians. The end of Pactyas is unknown, but he was most probably sent to Cyrus and put to death, after a succession of tortures. The Chians from that time carefully excluded all the productions of Atarneus from their temples; they would never offer its barley-meal to any of the gods, or make any sacrificial cakes from its fruits.

But now to describe Sardis and the Lydians as they were in the days of Herodotus. The satrapy of Lydia was the richest in Asia Minor. The country was an emporium for the exportation of Asiatic produce into

Europe; for whilst the sea commerce was principally in the hands of the Greek cities on the coast, a large portion of the land traffic was carried on by the Lydians. Sardis, the ancient capital of the Lydian kings, had become the residence of the Persian satrap. The territory in which it was situated possessed rare fertility, and included the auriferous mountain of Tmolus. The river Pactolus, which flowed right through the centre of the market-place, brought down considerable quantities of grains of gold from this mountain. Not only Greeks and other neighbouring nations resorted to Sardis as a great place for trade, but even remote nomad tribes visited the city for the exchange of their several commodities. Above all, however, Sardis was a principal mart for slaves; and especially the trade in eunuchs for the harems of the Persian grandees was carried on there upon an extensive scale.

The city itself had nothing much to recommend it, and certainly was not distinguished for magnificence. Most of the houses were built entirely of reeds, and those which had brick walls were thatched with reeds. When the Ionian revolt broke out about fifty years before Herodotus's visit, a soldier set fire to one of these houses, and the flames quickly spread from street to street, until the whole of Sardis was burnt to the ground, and even the temple of the national goddess Cybele fell in the general conflagration. It seems, however, to have been quickly rebuilt, and in the same simple fashion.

The customs of the Lydians at the time of Herodotus's visit differed very little from those of the Greeks, excepting that the females were not brought up in the same strict seclusion. The daughters of the common people were permitted to dispose of themselves in marriage without the interference of their parents; but at the same time they provided themselves with dowries by the sacrifice of their modesty. Amongst the lower orders,

therefore, female virtue was almost entirely disregarded; and vice and immorality prevailed to a greater extent than in any other city of the ancient world, Babylon alone excepted. In other respects the Lydians appeared to be a commercial people depraved by luxury. They were said to have been the inventors of the art of coining gold and silver money. They were the first retail dealers, that is, they were the first who purchased articles from the manufacturer or importer, and sold them separately or in small quantities to the public. According to their own account they were also the inventors of games of dice, knuckle-bones, ball, and all the other games which were common in Lydia and Greece, draughts only excepted. These inventions were said to have been made to alleviate the effects of a prolonged famine, which occurred in the reign of Atys, one of their ancient mythical kings. The tradition ran that they used to play for one entire day and abstain from all food; and that on the second day they used to eat food and abstain from all play. After eighteen years, however, during which the famine increased instead of abating, the king divided the whole people into two parts, and cast lots which should remain in the country and which should emigrate to some foreign soil. Over those who remained he retained his sovereignty; but over those who were obliged by the lot to seek a new home he appointed his own son Tyrrhenus to be king. These last were said to have migrated to Italy, where they were called Tyrrhenians, and occupied the country now called Tuscany.

In the neighbourhood of Sardis were two extraordinary monuments, both of which were visited by Herodotus. We are fortunately able to describe them as they appeared at the time; and this description will, we think, be especially interesting to the modern reader, for both of the monuments are still in existence. The first was called the tumulus of Alyattes. It was nearly three-

quarters of a mile in circumference; its base being composed of large stones, whilst the remainder was a mere mound of earth. It was said to have been raised by merchants, artificers, and Lydian women; and when Herodotus saw it there were five columns on the summit bearing inscriptions setting forth how much of the work was executed by each class. These columns have now disappeared; and it is supposed by some critics that Herodotus was misinformed concerning the mound itself, and that it was not a tumulus constructed over the tomb of Alyattes, but a very ancient temple erected in honour of the Lydian goddess Cybele.

The other monument was on the road between Sardis and Smyrna, and was said to be one of the monuments of Sesostris, king of Egypt, to which we have already alluded. It consisted of a carving in the rock representing a man about seven feet high, holding a spear in his right hand and a bow in his left. The rest of the costume was partly Egyptian and partly Ethiopian; and across the breast between the shoulders was engraved an inscription in Egyptian hieroglyphics, signifying "I have conquered this country by my own shoulders." This monument is still to be seen. It consists of the figure of a warrior carved within a large square cavity, on the side of a smooth and nearly perpendicular rock. The figure wears a tiara, and holds a spear in its left hand, not in the right; but the right hand holds the string of a bow, which hangs on the warrior's back. Near the head is the representation of a bird in a sort of ornamented frame. The detail parts of the figure are seen very indistinctly, but the more prominent parts, including the inscription, have been carried away by time and exposure. The identity, however, is unquestionable, though some modern critics have doubted the Egyptian origin of the monument.

Herodotus met with no adventures at Sardis worth recording. The road between Sardis and Susa passed

all the way through an inhabited and safe line of country, and, by taking a circuitous course, avoided the roving predatory hordes which in all ages have occupied the steppes of Mesopotamia. All along it, at suitable intervals, were royal stations garrisoned with Persian soldiers, and also excellent caravanserais for the accommodation of travellers. Frequently during his journey Herodotus saw the celebrated Angareion, or Persian system of post, in full activity. This was the most rapid means of communication in the ancient world, and was planned as follows. Mounted couriers were stationed at intervals of one day's journey apart. The first courier gave his message to a second, the second again to the third, and so on to the end, similar to the torch race of Hephæstus amongst the Athenians, which we have already described; and neither rain nor snow, heat nor night, prevented each from performing his appointed stage with the utmost rapidity.

About halfway between Sardis and Susa the traveller had to cross the river Euphrates in a ferry-boat; and here Herodotus felt wondrously tempted to leave the Persian escort which he had accompanied thus far, and sail down the river Euphrates as far as the great city of Babylon. The highway was so well guarded and so much frequented by merchants and other travellers, that even if he returned up the river, and proceeded to Susa alone, he need not have feared any dangers from banditti on the way; but he was informed that he could proceed from Babylon by another and a direct route to Susa, and this information determined him on gratifying his curiosity by a visit to the celebrated city.

Herodotus obtained a passage on board a boat belonging to an Armenian merchant who carried palm wine to Babylon. The boats used for this purpose were of a very peculiar construction. They were perfectly circular, without any difference between the stern and the prow; and they

were made entirely of plaited willows, covered on the outside with leathern hides and lined on the inside with reeds. These boats were carried down the river by the force of the stream, and each one required two men to steer it, one man drawing in his oar whilst the other thrust out. The boat which conveyed our traveller was one of the largest on the river, and would carry a freight of a hundred and twenty tons. Every vessel carried at least one ass on board, and some of the larger ones carried several of these animals; for after the Armenian traders had reached Babylon and disposed of their cargo, they were accustomed to sell the wicker framework of their boats, together with the lining of reeds, by public auction, and then to load the ass with the leather and skins, and return to Armenia by land, as it was impossible to navigate up stream because of the rapidity of the current.

In no very long time the stream of the Euphrates carried our traveller from the highlands of Armenia to the rich and fertile plains of Babylon. It was harvest time, and Herodotus, who had previously heard astonishing stories of the wondrous harvests of Babylon, was struck with surprise and admiration at the still more astonishing reality. No trees excepting the palm cast their shadows upon the fields, and neither the fig, the vine, nor the olive would flourish in the soil; but the grain filled the land with glorious plenty; the blades of wheat and barley were full three inches in breadth; and Herodotus, when he gazed upon the superabundant crops, fully believed the story that the harvest generally produced from two to three hundredfold. The Babylonian territory was indeed admirably adapted for the growth of corn. Very little rain fell in the country, but the want of water was supplied by the Euphrates. In ancient times this river had inundated the country every year, like the Egyptian Nile; but Queen Semiramis prevented the overflow by the erection of stupendous mounds or dams along the banks of the

Euphrates; and henceforth the land was irrigated by the hand and by engines. The entire territory was intersected, like Egypt, by numerous canals, the largest of which could be navigated by ships, and stretched from the Euphrates to the Tigris.

At last Herodotus caught a distant view of the mighty palaces and temples of the enormous city of Babylon, and gradually approached the ruins of those massive and tremendous walls which had more than once set at defiance the whole armies of Persia. The river Euphrates ran right through the centre of the city, and Herodotus was enabled to form some conception of the extent and magnificence of Babylon before he landed at one of the piers. But instead of following him to his lodgings in the city and describing his proceedings, we shall endeavour to give the results of his visit.

The empire of Babylon, established by Nebuchadnezzar, had fallen in its turn, like the empires of Media and Lydia, at the feet of the great Persian conqueror of Asia. But though the city had lost her power and independence, yet her riches and luxury continued to be an astonishment to the ancient world. Her productive soil and extensive commerce supplied every want and gratified every desire. Her wealth was supposed to form one-third of the wealth of Asia; and she was therefore the most important of all the Persian satrapies. The satrap received daily, as the produce of his province, twelve gallons and a half of silver; and he was enabled to keep 800 horses and 16,000 mares, in addition to the horses used in war. He likewise had an immense number of Indian dogs. This foreign breed, which was very extensively imported by the ancients from the far east, was said to be the largest and strongest in existence. It was the best adapted for hunting wild beasts, and would even readily attack the lordly lion. The Persians were still as much attached to the pleasures of the chase as when they had roved over their own bleak and rugged

mountains. The nobles therefore kept a large pack of these famous dogs, and were even accustomed to take them with them on their journeys and military expeditions; but the satrap of Babylon maintained an incredible number, and exempted four towns in his government from the payment of all taxes upon the condition of their supplying his dogs with sufficient food.

The first thing, of course, which attracted our traveller's attention, was the extraordinary arrangement and architecture of the city, and the peculiar appearance of the people. Long straight streets, leading down to the banks of the river in parallel lines, and intersected by other lines of streets at right angles. Magnificent palaces, constructed of the finest brick, and surrounded by beautiful gardens, elevated one above the other upon a succession of broad terraces. Houses rising three or four stories in height, and spreading over a very large area. Immense bazaars, glittering with merchandise, and crowded with people. Within the city walls, and even bordering on the busiest streets, he saw pastures covered with cattle, and corn lands covered with the harvest, sufficient, as he was told, to maintain the entire city during the most protracted blockade. The people were habited, not in the cool garments of Hellas, nor in the tight-fitting raiment of Persia, but in a costume which was at once loose, warm, and luxurious. It consisted of a gown of linen or cotton, flowing down to the feet; over this was an upper woollen garment; and a white woollen mantle covered the whole. Their hair was very long, and kept together by their turbans; and they appeared to be very fond of anointing their entire bodies with perfumes. Every man wore a signet ring, and carried a curiously wrought staff; and on every staff was carved either an apple, a rose, a lily, an eagle, or something else of the same kind; for it was not allowable to carry a stick without a device.

After a few days, Herodotus learnt something of the shape and size of the city. It was an immense square, of which the city wall measured on each side fifteen English miles in length. The streets, fields, and gardens within the walls, therefore, measured sixty miles in circumference, and comprehended an area of more than two hundred square miles. The stupendous walls were said to be five hundred and forty feet high, and eighty-five feet in thickness; but they had been to a great extent destroyed by the Persian conquerors, though they were still surrounded by a wide and deep moat. The banks of the Euphrates, which flowed through the centre of the city, were likewise protected by walls of baked brick, which ran along the curvatures of the river, and thus united the two elbows of the great outer wall; and where the streets descended towards the river there were brazen gates opening through the river wall, and leading down to the water's edge. The banks of the river were lined throughout the city with burnt brick.

The great outer wall which surrounded the vast city was likewise constructed of burnt bricks in the following manner. The earth which was thrown up in digging the moat was converted into bricks, which were baked in kilns. Hot asphalt was used for cement, and wattled reeds were placed between the thirty bottom layers of bricks. The sides of the moat were first bricked up, and then the walls were constructed. Along the top of the wall, and throughout its entire extent, were two rows of towers or houses, one on the outer edge of the wall, and the other on the inner. These houses were one story high; but there was sufficient space on the top of the wall, and between the two rows, to turn a chariot with four horses. There were also a hundred gates in the wall, made entirely of brass, posts, lintels, and all.

The only communication in ancient times between the two divisions of the city, was by means of a ferry across

the Euphrates. At length, however, queen Nitocris, the wife of Nebuchadnezzar, turned the river for a while into a huge reservoir, which she had previously prepared, and then built piers in the centre of the stream, composed of large blocks of stone, clamped together with iron and lead. During the day planks of timber were laid upon these stone piers, and thus formed a bridge by which the people might pass over; but at night these planks were removed, to prevent thieves from gliding about to different parts of the city.

In each division of the city there was a most magnificent building, strongly fortified. In the one was the royal palace of Nebuchadnezzar, built of bricks of the very finest quality, and including the wondrous succession of terraced walks rising high in the air, and known by the name of hanging gardens. This was now the residence of the Persian satrap, and Herodotus could not gain admission; but he admired the immense brazen gates which led to the splendid enclosure, and heard stories which seemed almost fabulous, of the beauty and brilliancy of the spacious and magnificent halls, which were still remaining as fresh as when first erected.

In the other division of the city was the immense temple of Belus, or Baal, the deification of the Sun as he was worshipped by the Babylonians. This temple was a square building, a quarter of a mile in length and breadth. In the midst of it rose a solid square tower, one-eighth of a mile in length and breadth, upon which were built seven towers, one upon the top of the other, so that there were eight in all. An ascent was on the outside, and ran spirally round all the towers. Halfway up there was a landing-place and seats for resting on. In the topmost tower was a spacious chapel, splendidly furnished, with a large couch and a golden table, but containing no images of the god. The Chaldæans, who were priests of Belus, said that the god sometimes came down to earth,

and slept on the couch in the chapel. Beneath this chapel there was another, and within it was a large golden statue of Belus in a sitting posture with a magnificent table of solid gold before it. The throne on which Belus was sitting, and likewise the step to it, were all made of pure gold. The Chaldæans told Herodotus that the gold altogether weighed 800 talents, which would be equal to twenty-two tons; and the present value of the metal, calculating 4*l.* to the ounce, would be 2,365,440*l.* sterling. Outside the temple was an immense altar, upon which full-grown sheep were sacrificed, and on which the Chaldæans consumed every year, at the great annual festival in honour of Belus, a thousand talents' weight of frankincense, which was equivalent to about twenty-five tons. There was also another altar of gold, upon which only sucklings were sacrificed to the god. Herodotus was likewise told that there had been erected within the precincts of the temple an immense statue of solid gold. Darius, the son of Hystaspes, intended to carry it away, but was restrained by his superstitious fears. Xerxes, his son and successor, however, not only boldly carried it off, but killed the priest who forbade him to remove it.

We have every reason to believe that the remains of this great temple of Belus are to be identified with the huge oblong mass of vitrified brick, 2000 feet in circumference and 200 feet high, which is called by the Arabs in the present day Birs Nimroud, or Nimrod's tower. This mass is situated on the western bank of the Euphrates, whilst the huge mounds which are supposed to cover the royal palace of Nebuchadnezzar and other magnificent buildings, are on the eastern bank. Modern travellers who have visited Birs Nimroud have been able to trace three out of the eight stories which existed in the time of our traveller. The first story is about sixty feet high, cloven in the middle by a deep ravine, and inter-

sected in all directions by furrows channeled by the successive rains of ages. The second stage springs out of the first in a steep and abrupt conical form. On the summit is a solid mass of tower-like ruin, twenty-eight feet wide, and thirty-five feet high, forming, to all appearance, the angle of some square building. The ground about the foot of the hill is now clear, but is again surrounded by walls which form an oblong square, and enclose numerous heaps of rubbish, probably once the dwellings of inferior deities, or of the priests and officers of the temple. The foundation, however, of this primeval structure must be carried back to the time of Nimrod, in the second century after the flood, when the nations said, "Let us build a city and tower, and make us a name."* Probably it was even then consecrated to Baal or the Sun, and thus brought down the vengeance of Jehovah upon the builders; and whilst the descendants of Noah spread over the whole earth, it remained through successive ages a lasting monument of the guilty presumption of their idolatrous ancestors. This supposition in no way militates against the gradual additions and embellishments which it afterwards received, as the primeval temple of a national deity; neither can anything be argued against its high antiquity from bricks with inscriptions having been found amongst its ruins. It stands not only as a monument of the days of Herodotus, but, above all, as a confirmation of Holy Writ; a solemn relic of the first and mightiest fabric erected by the hand of man, fulfilling in the present day the sacred words of the prophet: "Wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures."†

The great beautifier of the city of Babylon seems to have been Queen Nitocris, the wife of Nebuchadnezzar, whose construction of the bridge over the Euphrates has

* Gen. xi. 4. † Isaiah, xiii. 21.

already been described. This great princess seems to have been actively engaged in fortifying and adorning Babylon whilst her celebrated husband was engaged in foreign conquests, though he seems to have taken to himself all the credit of his wife's labours: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty."* Nitocris used every means to protect the city against the newly risen power of the Medes. She dug channels above the Euphrates, and rendered its stream, which in former days had run in a straight line, so winding that in its course it touched a village named Ardericca no less than three times. Thus all those who went down the stream of the Euphrates to the city of Babylon were carried to Ardericca three times on three successive days. She also prepared a sepulchre for herself above the most frequented gate of the city, bearing the following inscription:—

"If any one of my successors, kings of Babylon, shall happen to want money, let him open this sepulchre and take what he requires; but if he wants it not, let him not open it."

This sepulchre remained undisturbed until the time of Darius, who considered it to be hard that money should be lying there unappropriated, and that the gate also should be unused, because a dead body was lying over the heads of all who passed through it. He therefore opened the tomb, but found no money, and only the body and these words:—

"Wert thou not insatiably covetous and greedy of the most sordid gain, thou wouldst not have opened the resting-place of the dead."

Of all the Babylonian customs of which Herodotus obtained any information, two of them struck him as being

* Daniel, iv. 30.

equally wise and peculiar. The first of these was connected with their marriages. Once a year in every village all the marriageable girls were collected together and put up to auction. A crier directed them to stand up one after the other, beginning with the handsomest, and each one was then knocked down to the highest bidder, who, however, was not allowed to carry off a maiden without giving security that he would marry her. The more beautiful were of course purchased by the rich Babylonians, who strove eagerly to outbid each other. When these were all disposed of the crier directed the plainer damsels to stand up in a similar manner, but offered to give a sum of money with each. Accordingly the poorer Babylonians began to bid against each other to see who would marry an ill-favoured wife for the smallest sum, the money having been already obtained by the sale of the more beautiful. Thus the handsome maidens helped the plainer ones to husbands; and fathers were not allowed to give away their daughters in marriage to whom they pleased. If a purchaser and his newly purchased wife could not agree, the money was repaid. Bachelors were permitted to come from one village to another to attend this matrimonial auction. In the time of our traveller the disasters attending the Persian conquest had rendered marriage less popular, and the public sale of wives was almost, if not quite, discontinued.

The other Babylonian custom which attracted the admiration of Herodotus was in connection with the practice of medicine. There were no physicians in Babylon whatever, but the people carried all their sick relations into the market-place, and every passer-by was obliged to ask the nature of the disease; and then, if the latter had ever had it himself, or seen it in others, he advised the patient to follow the treatment which he knew to have effected his own cure.

CHAP. XLI.

ASSYRIAN, BABYLONIAN, AND MEDIAN HISTORY,

ANTE B. C. 550.

CHARACTER OF THE GREAT ASIATIC EMPIRES.—THE OLD ASSYRIAN EMPIRE.—MISSION OF JONAH, B. C. 862.—FUNERAL PILE OF SARDANAPALUS.—NINEVEH TAKEN BY ARBACES THE MEDE AND BELESIS THE BABYLONIAN, ABOUT B. C. 820.—SECOND ASSYRIAN EMPIRE UNDER THE MEDO-ASSYRIAN DYNASTY OF ARBACIDÆ.—PUL, TIGLATH-PILESER, SHALMANESER AND SENNACHERIB.—DESTRUCTION OF THE SECOND ASSYRIAN EMPIRE BY THE MEDES, B. C. 606.—HISTORY OF BABYLON.—NABONASSAR, MERODACH BALADAN, AND NEBUCHADNEZZAR.—HISTORY OF MEDIA.—REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT OF JUDGESHIPS.—ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MONARCHY BY DEIOCES, B. C. 711.—BUILDING OF ECBATANA.—COURT CEREMONIAL.—PHRAORTES, B. C. 647.—CYAXARES, B. C. 625—EXPELS THE SCYTHIANS—TAKES NINEVEH.—ASTYAGES, B. C. 585.—HISTORY AND CONDITION OF THE PERSIAN HIGHLANDERS.—STORY OF THE MARRIAGE OF MANDANE, THE MEDIAN PRINCESS, WITH CAMBYSES, THE PERSIAN CHIEFTAIN.—DREAMS OF ASTYAGES.—ATTEMPT TO ASSASSINATE THE INFANT CYRUS.—ROMANTIC STORY OF HIS PRESERVATION.—DISCOVERY MADE BY ASTYAGES.—HIS REVENGE.—POPULARITY OF CYRUS IN PERSIA.—LETTER FROM HARPAGUS.—CYRUS EXCITES THE PERSIAN CHIEFS TO REVOLT.—DEFEAT OF ASTYAGES, AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MEDO-PERSIAN EMPIRE BY CYRUS, B. C. 550.

FROM Babylon Herodotus of course proceeded to the great city of Susa; but before we follow him to the capital of the Persian empire it will be necessary to take a comprehensive survey of early oriental history, and of such biographical anecdotes as we can collect concerning the kings and warriors of the eastern world.

The three great empires of the east were those of Assyria, Chaldee-Babylonia, and Medo-Persia. All these trace back their origin through lists of unknown dynasties to the earliest times; but it is certain that at a primeval date the Assyrian was already the great ruling

power in Asia, and that for many centuries the Chaldee-Babylonian and the Medo-Persian empires were unable to establish their independence. The character of the great Asiatic empires may be described in a few words. At different periods warlike nomad hordes, pressed by famine or lured by the hope of plunder, have forsaken their northern or more sterile climes, to carry war and conquest into the fruitful and cultivated lands of Southern Asia. There the conquerors have established a brief but evanescent empire; for they have quickly adopted the luxurious habits of the vanquished nations, and consequently have been soon overthrown by fresh swarms of uncorrupted warriors, who also in their turn have degenerated and given way to new invaders. In this manner the empires of the Assyrians, the Chaldæans, the Persians, and the Parthians, were founded and fell; such, in the middle ages, was the history of the Arabian conquest, and such, up to the present day, has been the history of the empires of Tartary and Mongol. The extent of such conquests has astonished every historian. The fabled achievements of Semiramis and Nebuchadnezzar have been outdone by those of the successors of Mohammed and Ginghis Khan. The Saracen dominion extended at one period from Morocco and Spain to Hindustan; and the Mongol armies have fought at the same time in Silesia, and under the Wall of China.

The general features in the gradual internal development of all empires formed by nomad conquerors, are: first, the mere occupation of rich territories and levying of tribute, when the constitutions already established among the conquered or tributary nations are generally suffered to remain; secondly, the gradual progress towards the adoption of a fixed abode and the building of cities, together with the assumption of the customs and civilisation of the conquered; thirdly, the division into provinces, and, as a necessary consequence, the establishment of

satrap government; fourthly, insurrections of the satraps and pernicious influence of the seraglio, which quickly produced the dissolution of the empire, or its total annihilation by some violent attack from without.

The only trustworthy accounts of the old Assyrian empire are to be found in Scripture. Nimrod, the son of Cush, and grandson of Ham, founded the kingdom of Babel or Babylon, in the land of Shinar, on the banks of the Euphrates*; and then, according to the marginal version of the passage, went out into Assyria, and built Nineveh and other cities on the banks of the Tigris and to the north-east of Babylon. Henceforth the names of Nineveh on the Tigris, and Babylon on the Euphrates, peer through a cloud of legend, which, until very lately, defied the keenest historical vision. The astounding discoveries of Mr. Layard have, however, filled all Europe with hope and expectation. Colonel Rawlinson, Dr. Hinckes, and a host of other learned antiquarians and philologists, are still laboriously engaged in explaining and interpreting the countless treasures of that wondrous mine which was opened by the immortal Layard. Upon these, however, we shall not dwell in the present biography. It is sufficient to say, that they everywhere confirm the testimony of Holy Writ.

The old Assyrian empire evidently extended over an immense portion of civilised Asia. Chedorlaomer, who invaded Palestine and subdued the five kings in the time of Abraham†, was probably an Assyrian monarch. The exploits of Ninus and Semiramis belong to a later period, but have been too much exaggerated for us to arrive at the truth until further discoveries have been made and further inscriptions have been deciphered. The Assyrians were a powerful people in the days of Moses‡, and David likewise mentions them amongst his enemies§; but they

* Gen. x. 10, 11.
† Gen. xiv.
‡ Numb. xxiv. 22.
§ Psalm lxxxiii. 8.

do not fairly appear upon the stage of history until the latter days of the Israelite monarchy. About B. C. 862, the prophet Jonah was sent to Nineveh, the mighty capital of the Assyrian empire. At that time Nineveh was three days' journey in circumference *; and as we learn that it contained more than 120,000 children who could not discern between their right hand and their left†, the population has been estimated at 2,000,000 of souls. Nineveh was built in the same fashion as Babylon, and protected by similarly strong fortifications. Each city was of a square form, through which the streets extended in straight lines, intersecting each other at right angles. Both Nineveh and Babylon thus presented the appearance of vast camps transformed into cities; and we need scarcely wonder at the grandeur and extent of the palaces, temples, and walls, when we consider that a plentiful supply of building materials could always be found near the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates; clay that the sun could dry or the fire could bake into bricks, and sources of bitumen which rendered all mortar unnecessary.

The mission of Jonah was successful. The entire city clothed itself in sackcloth and repented before the Lord. But the power of Assyria had been for long on the decline. She had been unable to save her vassal, Priam king of Troy, from the vengeance of the Greeks under Agamemnon. She could not assail, with any success, the independent empire of David and Solomon; nor could she prevent the establishment of the kingdom of Damascus under the Benhadads, or the settlement of the Greek colonies on the shores of Asia Minor. About the year B. C. 820, Sardanapalus, the most effeminate and luxurious of even Asiatic sovereigns, sat upon the throne of Nineveh. Arbaces, the governor of Media, and Belesis, the governor of Babylonia, marched against him, and besieged Nineveh. Sardanapalus saw that the city

* Jonah, i. 2. iii. 2, 3. † Jonah, iv. 11.

was lost, and is said to have resolved upon dying such a death as should cover the infamy of his scandalous and effeminate reign. About a century before, Zimri, king of the Ten Tribes of Israel, had been besieged in the city of Tirzah by the rebel general Omri, the father of the celebrated Ahab. The city was taken by Omri; and Zimri, seeing that all was lost, shut himself up in his palace, and, setting it on fire with his own hands, perished in the flames.* Sardanapalus now appears to have followed the example of Zimri. He ordered a large funeral pyre to be erected in the palace of the Assyrian kings; and then brought out all his treasures and all his wives and concubines and placed them on the pyre; and then ascending it himself, he set it on fire, and the whole perished in the flames.

A new dynasty of kings ascended the throne of Nineveh, whom we may call the Arbacidæ, as they appear to have belonged to the family of Arbaces the Mede. We may take it for granted that the Assyrian kings who appeared in the latter days of the divided Hebrew monarchies of Judah and Israel, belonged to this Medo-Assyrian dynasty of the Arbacidæ. About B. C. 770 the Assyrian king Pul invaded Northern Palestine †; and in B. C. 750 his successor Tiglath-Pileser ‡ carried away captive the Syrians of Damascus and the Israelites east of the Jordan. § Next followed the Assyrian captivity of the Ten Tribes of Israel, which was executed by Shalmaneser in B. C. 730. ‖ The second Assyrian empire was now in its zenith, and fifteen years after the captivity Sennacherib marched through Palestine with an immense army for the invasion of Egypt; but the opposition which he received from Hezekiah, the pious king of Judah, and the destruction of his army by the angel of the Lord, has already been narrated in our Egyptian history.

* 1 Kings, xvi. 18.
† 1 Kings, xv. 19.
‡ Tiglath-Pul-Assur, *i. e.*, the tiger lord of Assyria.
§ 2 Kings, xv. 29.
‖ 2 Kings, xvii.

The loss of this splendid army heralded the decline of the second Assyrian empire. A conspiracy was formed in the palace, and Sennacherib was assassinated by two of his sons whilst worshipping in the temple of Nisroch. The second Assyrian empire became, like the first, gradually sunk in luxury and effeminacy, and Nineveh was taken by the Medes about B. C. 606.

We now turn to the history first, of Babylonia, and then of Media, but we must remind the reader that we have been compelled to fill up some gaps by conjectures. After the first capture of Nineveh, Babylonia fell into the hands of a dynasty of Chaldæan kings. Of these Nabonassar is famous because his reign was fixed upon by the Babylonian astronomers as the era from whence they began their calculations. This era is called the Era of Nabonassar, and commenced on the 26th of February, B. C. 747. Another king, Merodach Baladan, is also known to the Scripture reader as having sent ambassadors to king Hezekiah, about B. C. 712, to congratulate him on his recovery from sickness. The account of this embassy is especially interesting from its connection with the sharp reproof administered by the prophet Isaiah to the Hebrew monarch for his ill-timed pride in exhibiting his treasures to the Babylonian envoys. The conquests of Nebuchadnezzar have already been mentioned. The taking of Babylon by Cyrus we shall have occasion to describe in our chapter on Persian history.

The history of Media next demands our attention. Media lay to the west and south of the Caspian Sea. After the overthrow of the first Assyrian empire by Arbaces and Belesis, Media appears to have continued in a state of freedom and independence, under a kind of republican government, in which each district chose its own judge. About B. C. 711, one of these judges, named Deioces, aimed at sovereign power. He applied himself with the utmost zeal to the just and upright discharge of his duties.

At that time lawlessness and injustice prevailed throughout Media, and consequently the fame of Deioces spread through the neighbouring districts, until persons came from all parts of the country to submit their quarrels to his decision. At last the Medes would apply to no other judge whatever; and then Deioces retired from the judgment seat, declaring that he could no longer neglect his own affairs for the sake of deciding the quarrels of others. This artful policy on the part of Deioces met with every success. Lawlessness and rapine once more prevailed throughout Media. An assembly of the people was convoked to discuss the state of the country and settle upon some means for suppressing the general disorders. The partisans of Deioces arose in the assembly and proposed the appointment of a king, and the motion was favourably received by all present. The question immediately arose as to who should be elevated to the sovereignty, and Deioces was named and chosen with acclamations. Deioces accepted the regal power, but required the Medes to build him a strong and spacious palace, and permit him to choose his own body guards. The Medes obeyed. By his direction they erected an extraordinary city which was named Ecbatana, and which henceforth became the metropolis of the Median kingdom. It was circular and built in a succession of terraces, each one rising above the other; the centre terrace containing the king's palace and treasury. The terraces were seven in number and each one was defended by walls. The appearance of Ecbatana from a distance was most splendid. The battlements of each terrace were of different colours, and could all be distinguished; as each interior terrace rose above the one outside it by the exact height of its battlement. The battlement surrounding the outermost circle was painted white, the second was black, the third was purple, the fourth was blue, the fifth was scarlet, the sixth was plated with silver, and the seventh,

which surrounded the royal palace and treasury, was plated with gold.

Deioces having thus defended his palace by extensive fortifications, began to establish all the etiquette and ceremonial of an eastern court. No private person was admitted into the royal presence, but could only consult the sovereign by means of messengers. No one could spit or laugh in his presence without being considered to have been guilty of a great indecency. This system of court etiquette was established for the purpose of conveying the idea that he was something more than mortal man; and at the same time to check all attempts at conspiracy or rebellion amongst those who in reality were his equals in birth and ability. He became likewise very severe in the distribution of justice. All disputants were compelled to send their cases to him in writing, and when he had come to a decision, he sent the writings back again. A spy system was also established in every part of his dominions. Whenever one man injured another, the event soon reached the royal ears, and the offending party was speedily summoned and punished in proportion to his offence.

Deioces died B. C. 647, after a reign of fifty-three years, and was succeeded by his son Phraortes. The new king aimed at foreign conquest. He subdued the hardy and warlike Persians to the south of Media, and led his victorious army to the walls of Nineveh; but perished there with the greater part of his forces in the year B. C. 625, after a reign of twenty-two years.

Cyaxares, the son of Phraortes, next ascended the throne of Media. He determined to extend the conquests of his father and avenge his death. He was the first Asiatic warrior who divided his army into cohorts, separating the spearmen, archers, and cavalry; for, before his time, neither description of troops had formed a separate corps, but all had fought together, archers mixed up with

spearmen, and cavalry with infantry, without the slightest attempt at management. He conquered the whole of Asia as far westward as the river Halys, and even commenced war against Lydia, which was settled in the manner already narrated.* He next marched against Nineveh, but was called away by the inundation of a great Scythian horde; and several years elapsed before he was enabled to expel the invaders. At last he was enabled to concentrate his forces upon Nineveh, which he finally took about B. C. 606; and thus for ever overthrew the empire of Assyria.

Cyaxares died B. C. 585, and was succeeded on the throne of Media by his son Astyages. During the reign of Astyages that great revolution broke out which placed the celebrated Cyrus, the Persian, at the head of the Medo-Persian empire. It will therefore be necessary to take a brief glance at the contemporary state of Persia.

The Persian highlanders were divided into ten tribes or clans. The nobles, or warrior class, formed three clans; the agricultural population likewise formed three; whilst the remaining four comprehended the nomad races. Of the three tribes of nobles or warriors, the Pasargadæ were regarded as the noblest, and included the royal family of Achæmenids. This family was said to have been founded by Achæmenes, a name which is supposed to conceal that of the king Jemshid, the famous legislator of the Persians and ancient sovereign of Iran.† After the conquest of Persia by Phraortes, the country was perhaps ruled by the Achæmenids, subject of course to the imperial sway of Media.

Astyages, the new king of Media and its dependencies, had a daughter, to whom he gave the name of Mandane. When Mandane was still young, her father Astyages was

* See chap. xxxix.

† The names of Achæmenes and Jemshid have been identified by removing the Greek termination of *enes* and the Persian *shid*.

troubled with a dream, and, on applying to the Magian interpreters of visions, he was told that she was destined to cause the overthrow of the Median empire. Accordingly, when she had grown up, Astyages was afraid of marrying her to a Median noble, and therefore selected a husband from amongst the conquered aristocracy of Persia, whose native princes were apparently as much despised by the Median courtiers as the Highland chiefs of Scotland were, two centuries ago, by the frivolous courtiers of Charles the Second. The husband chosen by Astyages was named Cambyses, and belonged to the old royal family of the Achæmenids; but was withal of so peaceful a disposition that not the slightest fear was entertained that he would ever join in an insurrection, much less attempt the subversion of the Median monarchy.

In the first year of the marriage of Cambyses and Mandane the king Astyages had another dream. The Magian diviners were again consulted, and declared that a child of Mandane should reign in the stead of Astyages. The Median king immediately summoned Harpagus, who was a kinsman of his own and manager of all his affairs, and at the same time one of the most faithful of the Medes. "Harpagus," he said, "I am now about to entrust you with a business which I charge you to execute without fail, for otherwise you will expose me to danger, and bring ruin upon yourself. Mandane has become a mother, and you must take her child to your own house, and put it to death without compunction, and then bury it in whatever way you may think fit." Harpagus promised faithfully to obey. The infant grandson of his royal master was placed in his hands, and he carried it to his own house, but then burst into tears, and informed his wife of the cruel command of Astyages. He soon, however, determined how to act. He would not do the deed of blood with his own hands, because the infant belonged to his own kindred; and also because there was no one but

Mandane to succeed Astyages in the sovereignty, and therefore his life would some day be in the greatest danger from a queen whose first-born son he had put to death. He saw, however, that the child must be slain, and at last bethought him of a fitting executioner. He sent for one of Astyages's own herdsmen, named Mitradates, who grazed his cattle at the lofty mountains in the northern part of Media, near the Black Sea; and on the arrival of Mitradates, addressed him as follows: "Astyages bids you take this infant and expose it on the bleakest part of the mountains, that it may speedily perish; and he has charged me to add that if you should be tempted to save the child you will be condemned to the most cruel of deaths." The herdsman having heard these words, took the child and returned to his cottage at the foot of the mountains. It so happened, that during his absence, his own wife had given birth to a son; and indeed, all the time he had been away he had been anxious for the welfare of his wife, whilst she on her part had been alarmed at the unaccustomed summons which her husband had received from Harpagus. She accordingly asked him at once why he had been so hastily sent for. "Wife," he replied, "when I reached the city of Ecbatana, I saw and heard what I wish I had never witnessed, and what I wish had never befallen our noble masters. The whole house of Harpagus was filled with lamentations; and when I entered his presence I saw an infant lying before me, panting and crying, dressed in gold and a robe of various colours. Harpagus then ordered me to carry the child away, and expose it in that part of the mountains which was most frequented by wild beasts; and at the same time he told me that it was the king Astyages who had imposed the task upon me, and that if I failed I should incur the severest punishment. I accordingly took up the infant and carried it away, supposing it to have belonged to one of the servants; for though I

was astonished at seeing the child dressed in such fine apparel, and at the sorrow which prevailed throughout the house, I had no suspicions. On my way home, however, I heard the whole truth from a servant who accompanied me from Ecbatana, that the child was the son of Mandane and Cambysés."

When Mitradates the herdsman had finished these words he showed the babe to his wife; and she, seeing that it was large and beautiful, besought him with tears to save it. He said that it was impossible, for that spies would be sent by Harpagus to see that the deed was properly performed. She replied that she herself had given birth to a child, but that it had been born dead; and she proposed that he should expose their own dead child, and bring up the son of Mandane instead. The herdsman adopted this suggestion. He dressed the dead child in the fine robes of the stranger, and exposed it in the most desolate part of the mountains; and then on the third day he fetched it away, and carried it to Ecbatana to show Harpagus. The latter did not, however, care to see it, being satisfied that the deed had been accomplished; and merely sent some of his trustiest guards to bury the child. Thus the herdsman's son was buried, and the infant afterwards named Cyrus was brought up by the herdsman's wife, though of course under some other name belonging to the family.

When Cyrus reached the age of ten years the secret of his birth was discovered by the following circumstance. One day he was playing with the other boys of the village, and was chosen by his companions to be their king. Accordingly he appointed some of them to build houses, and others to be his body guard; one of them to be the king's eye or royal inspector, and another to bring messages to him according to the court etiquette established by Deioces. In short he assigned to each of them his proper duty. Now one of the boys who were playing was the

son of a Median of high rank named Artembares, and refused to obey the orders of Cyrus. The mock king, however, commanded the others to seize the delinquent, and then scourged him with his own hand. The boy took the indignity to heart, and complained to his father of the punishment which he had received from the son of a herdsman. Artembares, in a transport of rage, went immediately to the king and complained of the indignity; and Astyages at once sent for Mitradates and his reputed son. When the latter entered the royal presence Astyages asked Cyrus, how he, the son of a herdsman, could have dared to treat the son of one of the chief men in the kingdom with such indignity. Cyrus replied: "Sire, I treated him with justice. The boys of our village, of which he was one, made me a king in sport, because I appeared to them to be the fittest for that office. Now all the others obeyed my commands, but this one refused to pay the slightest attention to my orders, and was consequently punished. If then I am on this account to be considered deserving of punishment, here I am ready to submit to it."

Whilst the boy was thus speaking Astyages recognised him, both by his countenance and language, and saw likewise that his age corresponded with the years which had elapsed since the exposure. The discovery rendered him speechless for some time, but at last he recovered himself sufficiently to dismiss Artembares with the promise that neither he nor his son should have for the future any cause of complaint. He then ordered Cyrus to be conducted into an inner room, and began to examine Mitradates. The herdsman, of course, affirmed that the boy was his own son, and that the mother was still living; but Astyages ordered him to be taken to the torture, and then Mitradates confessed the whole matter, and concluded with prayers and entreaties for pardon. Astyages did not trouble himself to punish the herdsman, but sent for

Harpagus, and asked him how he had disposed of the infant son of Mandane. Harpagus seeing Mitradates present, felt that falsehood would be utterly useless. He therefore replied as follows: "O king, after I had carried away the infant I carefully considered how I might obey your commands without being guilty of the crime of murder. I then sent for this herdsman, and gave the child into his hands, and told him that you had ordered him to put it to death; and I charged him to expose it on some bleak mountain, and keep watch until it died, threatening him at the same time with the severest punishment if he failed to obey my orders. Afterwards, when the child was dead, I sent some of my trustiest guards to see the body and bury it. This, O king, is the whole truth, and such was the fate of the child."

Astyages dissembled his anger, but determined to be terribly revenged on Harpagus. He told the latter the story which the herdsman had related, and ended by saying that he was happy to say that the child was alive and well. "I have suffered," he added, "much sorrow in believing that the child was dead and in bearing the reproaches of my daughter Mandane; therefore, since fortune has taken a favourable turn, I pray you to send your own son to be a companion to my recovered grandson, and do you be with me at supper, when I purpose to offer sacrifice to the gods for the preservation of the child." Harpagus went home delighted with his escape and the royal invitation. He sent his only son, who was about thirteen years of age, to the palace, and told his wife of all the joyful things which had taken place. At the appointed hour he went to the banquet, and, when all the guests had assembled and the covers were removed, he saw before him the bleeding body of his murdered son.

Astyages having thus inflicted a terrible punishment on Harpagus, summoned the Magi for the purpose of deciding upon the fate of Cyrus. They still adhered to the

former interpretation of the dream; but when they heard that the boy had been already chosen king in sport, they considered that the dream was fulfilled, and that Astyages need not trouble himself any further concerning his Persian grandson. Accordingly, the king sent Cyrus to his parents in Persia; and it is unnecessary to dilate upon the joy of Cambyses and Mandane upon recovering their long lost, and, as they supposed, murdered son.

When Cyrus had reached man's estate, he became one of the most able and popular men in Persia. Harpagus, who was burning with vengeance, perceived that Cyrus might possibly become his avenger, and therefore paid great court to the young Persian chief, and contracted a firm friendship with him. Meantime, seeing that the conduct of Astyages was very tyrannical towards the Medes, he formed a conspiracy with the principal men of the Median nation for the accession of Cyrus to the throne and the deposition of Astyages. Having brought all his plans to maturity, he wished to discover them to Cyrus; but the roads were so well guarded, and everything that passed between Media and Persia was so closely examined, that he did not know how to open a communication. At last he hit upon the following artifice. He contrived to conceal the necessary writing in the belly of a hare; and then, sewing the skin carefully together, he gave it, together with some nets, to one of his trustiest servants to carry to Persia. The messenger, who was disguised as a hunter, reached Cyrus in safety; and, in accordance with the instructions which he had previously received from Harpagus, directed the Persian chief to open the hare with his own hand, and when no one else was present. Cyrus accordingly did so, and found the following letter:—

"Ecbatana.

"Son of Cambyses,

"I am assured that the gods watch over you, for other-

wise you could never have arrived at your present fortune. I entreat you now to take vengeance on your murderer Astyages; for, as far as he is concerned, you died long enough ago; and nothing but the care of the gods and my protection have preserved you alive. You have been long informed of how Astyages behaved towards you, and of how much I have suffered from his hands because I saved your life. If you will now follow my counsel, you shall rule over that great empire which is now swayed by Astyages. Persuade the Persians to revolt, and then invade Media; and whether I or or any other illustrious Mede be sent to oppose you, our forces will desert at the first onset and pass over to you. Since, then, everything is ready here, do as I advise, and do it without delay.

"HARPAGUS."

Cyrus eagerly accepted the proposals of Harpagus, and considered how he could best induce the Persians to revolt. At last he hit upon the following plan. He convened an assembly of the Persian tribes, and exhibited a fictitious written order, as if from Astyages, appointing him commander-in-chief of the Persian forces. He then ordered every one to attend on the following day in a field overgrown with briars, and to bring his reaping-hook with him. Accordingly, when they had all assembled together, he set them to work for the entire day in clearing the field of briars; and when they had finished their task, he desired them to attend again on the following day to feast and make merry. For this purpose he collected and slew all the goats, sheep, and oxen which were the property of his father; and, further to promote the entertainment of the Persians, he added rich wines and abundance of delicacies. The next day, when they were met, he desired them to recline on the grass and enjoy themselves. When the feast was over, he asked them which day's fare they liked the best, the day of

labouring in the field or the day of banqueting on the grass? They replied that the contrast between the two was strong indeed, as on the first day they had everything that was bad, and on the second day everything that was good. Cyrus then at once discovered his intentions. "Men of Persia," he exclaimed, "you are the arbiters of your own fortune. If you obey me, you will enjoy greater blessings than those of to-day; if you shut your ears, you must prepare to encounter greater hardships than those of yesterday. My voice is the voice of freedom. I was sent by a divine providence to deliver you from the Median yoke. You are doubtless equal to the Medes in everything, and most assuredly you are as brave."

The Persians received with acclamations the speech of the ardent chieftain. They at once accepted Cyrus for their leader. The news of the insurrection soon reached the ears of Astyages; and he sent off a messenger to summon Cyrus to the court at Ecbatana. Cyrus bade the messenger tell his royal master that he would come fast enough, and before he was wanted. Astyages was now alarmed, and armed all the Medes; and then, as if the gods had deprived him of all his senses, made Harpagus their general. A battle ensued between the army of Harpagus and that of Cyrus. Such of the Medes as knew nothing of the plot fought as well as they could; others deserted to the Persians; but the far greater number purposely behaved as cowards, and fled from the field.

When the tidings of this shameful defeat reached the ears of Astyages, he exclaimed, "Cyrus shall not rejoice thus." He then executed the Magian diviners who had assured him that Cyrus might be sent to Persia without fear, and arming all the Medes, old and young, that were left in Ecbatana, he marched out to meet the Persians. A conflict ensued in which the Medes were completely defeated, and Astyages was taken prisoner. Harpagus, who could not forget the barbarous murder of his son, exulted over the

royal captive, and jeeringly asked him how he liked changing sovereignty for captivity. Astyages, however retorted, that Harpagus was a fool for giving the kingdom to Cyrus, when he might have had it himself, and a knave for enslaving the whole Median nation to their former servants on account of his own private injuries.*

Thus was the empire transferred from the Medes to the Achæmenids of Persia in the year B. C. 550, by the hand of the same great chieftain who subsequently issued the edict for the restoration of the Jews from their Babylonian captivity to their country and their temple.† The life of Astyages was however preserved, and he remained with Cyrus until the year of his death.

* The above account of the establishment of the Medo-Persian empire cannot be reconciled with the historical notices in the Book of Daniel. It is, however, to be simply regarded as one of the numerous traditionary histories of Persia which were floating about in the time of Herodotus. Our traveller himself, when he subsequently wrote the history of Persia, found that he could not reconcile the several stories which were told him, and therefore simply related the one which we have given above. The authentic one, which might have explained the few notices in the Book of Daniel, has been utterly lost, though glimpses of it appear in Xenophon's romantic life of Cyrus.

† Ezra, i. 1—4.

CHAP. XLII.

HISTORY OF PERSIA, B.C. 550—523.

CONQUESTS OF CYRUS. — STORY OF THE PIPER AND THE FISHES. — SUBJUGATION OF THE ASIATIC GREEKS. — EXPEDITION AGAINST BELSHAZZAR, KING OF BABYLON. — SIEGE AND CAPTURE OF BABYLON. — EDICT OF CYRUS FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE JEWS, B. C. 536. — CAMBYSES, B. C. 530. — REVOLT OF THE MEDIAN MAGIANS. — ANCIENT IDOLATRY. — THE SABÆAN OR IMAGE WORSHIP. — THE MAGIAN OR FIRE WORSHIP. — DOCTRINES OF ZOROASTER THE REFORMER. — HERETICAL PRACTICES OF THE MEDIAN MAGIANS. — CONTEST BETWEEN THE HERETICAL PARTY OF MAGIANS AND THE REFORMED PARTY OF ZOROASTER. — CYRUS THE PERSIAN, THE LEADER OF THE REFORMED PARTY. — CAMBYSES, A ZEALOUS PERSECUTOR OF THE MEDIAN HERETICS. — STORY OF SMERDIS, THE BROTHER OF CAMBYSES. — REVOLT OF THE MEDES UNDER SMERDIS THE MAGIAN. — CAMBYSES LEAVES EGYPT FOR SUSA. — HIS LAST WORDS. — DEATH AT ECBATANA IN SYRIA, B. C. 523.

THE principal events in the reign of Cyrus have been nearly all described in previous chapters. He subjected the whole of inner Asia, as far as the banks of the Halys, and then, when Crœsus the Lydian attempted to oppose the progress of his arms, he boldly marched on Sardis, and soon reduced the whole Lydian empire to his imperial sway. The Greek cities on the shore of the Ægean, who had previously paid tribute to Lydia, now wished to transfer their allegiance to Persia upon similar terms. Cyrus, however, refused to deal thus gently with them. When about to march on Sardis, he had sent envoys to the Ionians and Æolians to request them to revolt from Crœsus. At that time, however, they had refused to come over; but nowthat he had conquered Lydia, they were anxious to come to terms. Instead, therefore, of making the same friendly alliance with them which he

would have been glad enough to conclude before, he told them the following story: — "A piper seeing some fishes in the sea, took out his pipe and began to play to them, expecting that they would come ashore. Finding, however, that his hopes were disappointed, he took a casting-net, and soon inclosed a great number of fishes, and drew them out. The fishes now began to leap about; but he said to them, 'Cease your dancing now, since when I piped you refused to dance.'"

When the Asiatic Greeks received this fable in answer to their application, they began to fortify their cities with walls, and sent envoys to Sparta to implore the assistance of the Spartan people. The latter, however, refused to come to their relief, but contented themselves with sending a herald in the name of the Spartans to warn Cyrus not to injure any Greek city, for in that case they would at once interfere. Cyrus inquired of those about him who the Spartans were who had sent him such a warning; and on learning all about them, he said to the herald, "I was never in my life afraid of those people who set apart a place in their city for the purpose of lying and cheating each other; and if I continue in health, the Spartans shall not have to talk of the calamities of the Ionians, but of their own." This taunt was levelled at the Greek nation generally, who had a market in every city for the purposes of buying and selling; an institution which was totally unknown to the Persian people.

Cyrus then bent his steps towards the east, for the purpose of subjecting the Babylonian territory, leaving his generals to subdue the Greek cities in Asia Minor. This was accomplished chiefly by Harpagus the Mede, who took the cities by means of earthworks; for he forced the people to retire within their fortifications, and then, having heaped up mounds against the walls, he carried each city by storm. The incidents of this war were very few, and we have already narrated all that were worth relating.

Harpagus completely reduced the whole of the western coast of Asia Minor; and the Greeks in the islands, who had defied the power of Crœsus, now tendered their submission to Cyrus, lest they should suffer a similar fate.

Meantime Cyrus marched against Babylon, which was under the rule of Belshazzar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar. On his way he arrived at the river Gyndes, which could only be crossed in boats, and one of the sacred white horses which accompanied the expedition plunged into the stream through wantonness, and endeavoured to swim across, but the current carried it away, and it was drowned. Cyrus was exceedingly enraged at this ill omen, and in order to show his superior power over that of the river, he determined to weaken the stream and render it fordable. Accordingly he deferred his march on Babylon for an entire summer, and marked out 360 new channels in which to turn off the waters of the Gyndes, and this design was actually executed by his immense army.

The next spring he advanced against Babylon. The Babylonians hearing of his approach, marched out to meet him, but were quickly defeated. Cyrus then invested the enormous city, and endeavoured to take it by blockade; but the Babylonians had long expected his invasion, and had stored up sufficient provisions for many years' consumption. They therefore watched the siege from behind their stupendous walls without the slightest fear of the result.

Cyrus was soon reduced to the utmost perplexity. The city appeared to be impregnable. An incredible time elapsed without the siege being advanced a single step. At last he had recourse to the following plan. He posted one division of his army on that side of Babylon where the Euphrates entered the city, and another division on the opposite side, where the river made its exit, giving orders to both divisions to proceed boldly up the channel of the river towards the interior of the city directly the

stream should become sufficiently fordable. He then marched away with the ineffective part of his army, and diverted the Euphrates, by means of a canal, into an immense reservoir, which had been dug by Queen Nitocris. The river thus emptied of a large portion of its waters, became immediately fordable, and the two divisions of Persians marched boldly into the shallow stream towards the centre of the city.

That same night the Babylonians were engaged in celebrating a splendid festival. Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. While he tasted the wine, he commanded his servants to bring the golden and silver vessels, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem. Then they brought the golden vessels, and the king and his princes, his wives and his concubines, drank therein. In that same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him; and he cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldæans, and the soothsayers. Then came in all the king's wise men; but they could not read the writing, nor make known the interpretation thereof. Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his lords were astonied. Now the queen-mother came into the banquet-house, and said, "O king, live for ever: let not thy thoughts trouble thee. There is a man in thy kingdom in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light, and understanding, and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldæans, and soothsayers. Now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation." Then was Daniel brought in before the king.

And Daniel said, "Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation. This is the writing, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians."* Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom."†

That night the mailed hosts of Persia were splashing through the cold waters of the Euphrates. If the Babylonians had only shut the gates leading from the streets to the river, and mounted guard along the walls which ran along each bank, they would have caught the enemy as in a net, and destroyed the entire besieging army. But such was not the will of the God of nations. "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut. I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel."‡ Through the solitary streets bereft of their watchmen, the troops of Cyrus spread through the mighty city. The palace of Nebuchadnezzar was filled with armed men. The sounds of music and dancing were changed to horror-stricken shrieking. The wine

* UPHARSIN is an inflexion of the verb PARAS, from which PERES is derived.

† Daniel, v.

‡ Isaiah, xlv. 1—3.

was turned to blood. "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldæans slain."*

One of the earliest acts of the new conqueror was to restore the Jews from their captivity by that inspired edict which is still preserved in the pages of Ezra.

"THUS SAITH CYRUS KING OF PERSIA,

"The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem."

The career of Cyrus, however, was nearly closed. He fell, as already narrated, in the expedition against the Massagetæ of the Khirgis steppe, in the year B.C. 530, and his son Cambyses reigned in his stead.

Cambyses reigned seven years and five months, B.C. 530—523. The great event of this period was the invasion of Egypt, which we have already narrated. Persia had not yet come in contact with European Greece. The latter was in the hands of petty sovereigns. Polycrates was tyrant of Samos; Pisistratus was tyrant of Athens. Cambyses, after reducing Egypt, marched against the Ethiopians of the burning zone, and sent another army against the oasis of Zeus Ammon. Both expeditions failed, and Cambyses returned to Memphis in a state bordering on madness. At this moment a grand effort was made by the Magians to overthrow the Persian

* Daniel, v. 30.

supremacy, and to restore the Medic dynasty and the ancient ritual of the Magian religion; but, in order to understand the character of the revolution, it will be necessary to take a brief view of the prevailing religious belief of the eastern world.

Idolatry was anciently divided into two principal sects; the Sabæan, or worship of images, and the Magian, or worship of fire. The Sabæan prevailed amongst the Semitic races westward of the river Tigris; the Magian prevailed amongst the Persian races eastward of the river Tigris.

The Sabæans worshipped the sun under the names of Belus and Baal,—a deity with which, perhaps, the Zeus of the Greeks originally corresponded. The moon was likewise adored under the names of Astarte, Ashtaroth, and Aphrodite. The worship of the planets was introduced by the Chaldæans. Each of these gods was represented by some image or emblem. The personification of various attributes of deity, and of certain abstract ideas, was likewise accomplished by the Egyptians, and each personification was again represented by some image or emblem. Thus the number of gods rapidly increased. The Sabæan idolatry was carried to distant countries, the character of each deity, and even the mode of worship, differing with the character of the people who adopted it. The worshippers began to forget the origin of their gods. They began to regard them as superior beings, possessing the human form, but endowed with immortal life and supernatural vigour. They connected them with their own national legends. Thus the Greeks, during the historical period, called the sun-god Helios, and the moon-goddess Selene, without endowing them with any of those attributes which belonged to Baal and Astarte. The whole religious belief had undergone a gradual but thorough change. A few antiquarians, like our hero Herodotus, could identify some of the Greek gods with

those of other nations, but that was all. In primeval times, the worship of the sun and moon possessed many fascinations, even for the worshipper of Jehovah. Job, in protesting his general righteousness and integrity, says, "When I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness, my heart hath not been secretly enticed, nor my mouth kissed my hand."* The Ionian philosophers, in the time of Herodotus, were teaching that the sun was a mere mass of red-hot iron, and that the moon was only a huge stone.

The Magians likewise adored the sun, but they worshipped it only under the form of fire, which they regarded as the most perfect symbol of Deity. They believed that there were two principles; one the cause of all good, and the other the cause of all evil. The former was represented by light, and the latter by darkness. The good god was named Ormuzd, and the evil god was named Ahriman.

The religious ideas connected with this main doctrine were set forth by Zoroaster. In the ancient books which form the Zendavesta, that celebrated but little known reformer asserted the existence of a kingdom of light and a kingdom of darkness. In the former reigned Ormuzd, the author and giver of all good; in the latter reigned Ahriman, the source of all evil, moral as well as physical. The throne of Ormuzd was surrounded by the seven amshaspands, the princes of light, of whom he, Zoroaster, was the first. Subordinate to these were the izeds, or good genii. The kingdom of darkness subjected to Ahriman contained a similar hierarchy. The throne of Ahriman was surrounded by the seven superior devs, the princes of evil; and an infinite number of inferior devs, or evil genii, were subordinate to the seven, in the same way as the izeds were subordinate to the amshaspands. According to the same system, the kingdoms of Ormuzd

* The text is in the form of an oath, Job, xxxi. 26, 27.

and Ahriman were eternally opposed to each other; but at a future period Ahriman was to be overthrown, and the powers of darkness destroyed, and the dominion of Ormuzd was then to become universal, and the kingdom of light was alone to subsist and embrace the universe. Meantime, however, all that existed appertained either to the kingdom of Ormuzd or to that of Ahriman, whether rational or irrational, animate or inanimate. There were pure men, pure animals, pure vegetables,—all the creation of Ormuzd; and, again, there were impure men, impure animals, and impure vegetables,—all the creation of Ahriman. All men were accounted impure who, by thought, word, or deed, despised the laws of Zoroaster, which he received from Ormuzd, together with all poisonous or pernicious animals or reptiles, plants or vegetables. On the other hand, in the country where the law of Zoroaster was revered, everything was pure and holy; so that the precepts of Ormuzd extended their influence not only over the human race, but even to the brute and inanimate creation. It was the duty of the servant of Ormuzd to foster everything in nature which was pure and holy, and at the same time to attack and destroy all impure animals.*

The worship of fire and other religious ceremonies connected with the Magian religion, will be described in a future page. It is a curious fact, that the religion itself should have survived centuries of persecution, and many important revolutions. The fire-worshippers of Persia fled from before the sword of the intolerant and conquering Mohammedan to the deserts of Kerman and Hindostan, and finally, under the name of Parsees, settled at Bombay and in its vicinity. There they found refuge and toleration for themselves and their sacred books; and it is only within the last century that these important records, bear-

* See *Heeren's Asiatic Nations*, vol. i.

ing the name of the Zendavestas, have been rescued from obscurity and presented to Europe.

The period in which Zoroaster flourished cannot be distinctly ascertained; but it is generally believed that he lived during the time of the old Median dynasty, which had preceded the establishment of the Persian supremacy. He was not, however, the founder of the Magian religion, but its great reformer.* The Magian religion was said to have been promulgated by Ormuzd himself, in the golden age of Jemshid, the ancient sovereign of Iran. Its doctrines were preserved by the Magians, who formed a distinct tribe of the Medes, answering to the priest-caste amongst the Egyptians, and perhaps bearing some resemblance to the priests and Levites of the Hebrew community. The doctrine of Ormuzd, however, had been misrepresented during the age which preceded that of Zoroaster. A false and delusive Magia, the work of the devs of Ahriman, had crept in. Human sacrifices, and other strange and unholy rites, appear to have been practised contrary to the ordinances which Ormuzd had delivered to Jemshid. Zoroaster came to destroy this delusive Magia, to bring back the pure laws of Ormuzd, and to restore the golden age of Jemshid, which is thus celebrated in the Zendavestas:—"Jemshid, the father of his people, the most glorious of mortals whom the sun ever beheld. In his days animals perished not: there was no want either of water, or of fruit-bearing trees, or of animals fit for the food of mankind. During the light of his reign there was neither frost nor burning heat, nor death, nor unbridled passions, the work of the devs. Man appeared to retain for ever the age of fifteen; the children grew up

* There appears to have been at least two, if not more, Zoroasters. The first Zoroaster, or Zoroaster the Legislator, probably lived at some primeval period; whilst the second Zoroaster, or Zoroaster the Reformer, flourished about the same century as the prophet Daniel.

in safety as long as Jemshid reigned the father of his people."*

Zoroaster was enabled to carry out his reforms amongst the Magian priest-caste in spite of the opposition which he received from those who adhered to the false doctrines. It would seem, however, that many continued to regard his reformation with deadly hatred. These haters of the innovation were called the worshippers of the devs of Ahriman, probably in reference to the horrible magical and superstitious rites which were practised by the corrupted Magians in honour of Ahriman, the angel of darkness, the author and director of all evil, the deity below the earth. The Magians as a body, however, continued to be alone entitled to perform the offices of religion; they alone possessed the liturgies by which Ormuzd was to be addressed; they alone could present prayers and sacrifice to the deity; and they alone were acquainted with the ceremonies by which the prayers and sacrifices were to be accompanied. In this manner the Magians came to be considered as the only interlocutors between Ormuzd and mankind. It was to them alone that Ormuzd revealed his will; and they alone contemplated the future, and had the power of revealing its secrets.

It is of course impossible to ascertain the true state of religious parties after the establishment of the Persian dynasty of Cyrus. We cannot tell which party predominated, whether the old heretical, or the reformed party of Zoroaster. If, indeed, we might hazard a conjecture—for which, however, we have no historical authority—we should be inclined to think that the establishment of Cyrus on the throne of Media was as much a religious as a political revolution. The reformed doctrines of Zoroaster may have been held by the simple herdsmen and agriculturists of the Persian highlands; whilst the

* Zendavesta, i. 14. quoted by Heeren.

Median court at Ecbatana was corrupted by the abominable rites which were denounced by Zoroaster as contrary to the ordinances which Ormuzd had delivered to Jemshid. We can thus account for the signal success which attended the Persian revolt. Cyrus and his Persians were the followers of Zoroaster. They overthrew Astyages, who was evidently in the hands of the Magian priests, soothsayers, and councillors, who formed an important part of the court of Ecbatana. Cyrus became king of the Medes and Persians. He still retained the Magians as a priest-caste, in accordance with the laws of Zoroaster, but endeavoured to eradicate the heretical rites and doctrines of those Magians who had previously opposed the great reformer. We learn from Xenophon that he first appointed the Magians to chaunt sacred hymns at the rising of the sun, and to offer daily sacrifices.* Cyrus was succeeded by Cambyses, who, as we have seen by his conduct in Egypt, was a still more zealous follower of Zoroaster; and, besides repressing the heretical party in the Magian caste, persecuted with relentless rigour the image and calf-worshippers of Egypt.

Such, we may presume, was the state of affairs when that revolution broke out which is commonly known as the revolt of the Magians. Cambyses had a brother named Smerdis, who accompanied him in his expedition against Egypt. It will be remembered, that the envoys sent by Cambyses to the Ethiopians returned with an Ethiopian bow, and a challenge from the Ethiopian king; the latter implying, that when the Persians were strong enough to draw the bow, then they might attempt the invasion of Ethiopia. It so happened that the prince Smerdis was more successful than any other Persian in his attempts to draw the Ethiopian bow. His success, however, aroused the jealousy of Cambyses, who sent him

* Xenophon, *Cyrop.* viii.

back to Persia. Shortly afterwards, the jealousy of Cambyses increased. The king had a dream, in which a courier from Persia seemed to appear and inform him, that Smerdis was seated on the royal throne, and touched the heavens with his head. Alarmed at this vision, and fearing that it portended some conspiracy on the part of Smerdis, the king sent one of his most faithful courtiers to Susa, with orders to kill Smerdis; and the courtier, whose name was Prexaspes, set out on his cruel mission, and succeeded in putting the prince to death.

Soon after this event, it was popularly believed in Egypt that Cambyses was going mad. His conduct towards the Egyptian gods seemed to the superstitious people to be either a sure indication of insanity or else the cause of it. He was naturally subject to epileptic fits; and his disorder seems to have been increased by his intemperate indulgence in wine. He was, moreover, much exasperated by the failure of his expeditions against the Ethiopians and Ammonians; and he began to exhibit a cruel and arbitrary disposition, which alarmed all his court. We have seen that he was very nearly putting the Lydian king, Crœsus, to death with his own hand. He ordered twelve Persian nobles to be buried alive up to the head, without having any just cause for passing such a sentence. He acted most cruelly towards Prexaspes, who was one of the royal messengers, and who had contrived the murder of Smerdis. He one day asked Prexaspes what remarks were made by the Persians concerning their king. Prexaspes replied, "Sire, they extol you highly, but say that you are too much addicted to wine." Cambyses was enraged at the reply. "What!" he cried; "do the Persians say that I have drunk away my senses? We will see whether they have spoken the truth. Yonder is your son, my cup-bearer, standing under the portico. If I draw my bow and shoot an arrow through his heart, I shall prove that the Persians are liars; if, on the other hand, I miss him,

the Persians may say that they have spoken truth, and that I am not of sound mind." Cambyses then bent his bow and shot an arrow at the boy and pierced his heart. "There!" he cried, laughing, to the horror-stricken father, "I have shown that I am not mad, Prexaspes. Did you ever see a man take a better aim?" The terrified courtier was at once convinced that his sovereign was insane, and feeling that his own life was in danger, obsequiously replied, "Sire, I do not believe that a god could have shot so well."

Whilst these events were transpiring in Egypt, the Magians at Susa broke out into open revolt. The rebellion was headed by two brothers, one of whom, named Patizeithes, had been appointed steward of the royal palace. Patizeithes discovered that Smerdis, the brother of Cambyses, had been put to death by Prexaspes, a secret which was known to very few. Now the brother of Patizeithes was himself named Smerdis, and likewise bore a very exact resemblance to the brother of Cambyses; Patizeithes therefore induced him to personate Smerdis, the brother of Cambyses, and promised to manage everything for him. Accordingly the Magians were apparently revolting for the purpose of transferring the crown from Cambyses to Smerdis; but in reality were seeking to restore the crown to a Median dynasty, and re-establish the old Magian rites and superstitions which had been denounced by Zoroaster and abolished by Cyrus and Cambyses.

The tidings of this formidable rebellion soon reached the ears of Cambyses. Indeed, Patizeithes had sent heralds wherever a Persian army was posted, to proclaim that the soldiers must for the future obey Smerdis instead of Cambyses. The army of Cambyses had left Egypt and encamped at Ecbatana, a treasure-town in Syria, which probably corresponded to the Hamath of Old Testament history. Here the herald uttered his proclamation in the

midst of the troops, and in the very presence of Cambyses. The king at first thought he had been betrayed, and that his brother Smerdis had been saved alive, and was really heading the revolt. He at once summoned Prexaspes, and asked him if he had really slain Smerdis. Prexaspes replied, "Sire, it cannot be true that your brother Smerdis has revolted, for I myself put your order in execution, and buried Smerdis with my own hands. If, however, the dead are to rise again, you may expect Astyages the Mede to rise up against you; if, on the contrary, things are to be as they have been, it is impossible for Smerdis to do you a mischief. It appears to me that we should arrest the herald, and learn who sent him to proclaim King Smerdis."

This advice pleased Cambyses, and the herald was soon brought into the royal presence, and asked if Smerdis had given him his orders, or one of Smerdis's ministers. The herald replied that he had not so much as seen Smerdis, the brother of Cambyses, since the departure of the expedition to Egypt; but that Patizeithes the Magian, who had been appointed steward of the royal palace, had charged him to make the proclamation.

Prexaspes was thus cleared from the accusation of having disobeyed the king's commands, and suggested that it was the Magians who had revolted, under the leadership of Smerdis, the brother of Patizeithes. Cambyses saw at once the meaning of his dream, and bitterly deplored the execution of his brother. He then leaped upon his horse for the purpose of proceeding with all speed to Susa. At that moment the knob at the lower end of his sword or dirk sheath fell off. The point of the dirk, which was worn on the right thigh, was thus left bare; and in the action of leaping on to his horse the blade inflicted a dangerous wound on his thigh, in the same part as that where he himself had formerly smitten the Egyptian calf-god Apis. Cambyses thinking himself

to be mortally wounded, asked the name of the place, and was told that the town was named Ecbatana. Now whilst he was staying in Egypt he had been informed by the oracle at Buto that he would die at Ecbatana; and consequently he had supposed that he should die in his old age at the great city of Ecbatana, in Media, where all his treasures were. When told, however, that the Syrian town went by the same name, he at once comprehended the meaning of the oracle, and exclaimed, "Here it is fated that Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, should die."

Twenty days after the accident he felt that his end was approaching, and he summoned the principal Persians round his couch, and addressed them as follows:—"I am constrained to make known to you a certain circumstance which, above all others, I wished to conceal. In Egypt I saw a vision in my sleep, which I wish I had never seen. I dreamed that a messenger arrived from Susa and announced to me that Smerdis was seated on the royal throne and touched the heavens with his head. Fearing then lest my brother Smerdis should deprive me of my kingdom, I foolishly and precipitately sent Prexaspes to Susa to put him to death. Since that crime was perpetrated I have lived in security, never considering whether some other mortal might not rise up against me in the place of Smerdis. Thus I became a fratricide without preserving my kingdom. It was Smerdis the Magian against whom the deity forewarned me. It is Smerdis the Magian who has seized the throne, and that Smerdis who might have avenged me has perished by my hand. Since, then, my brother is no more, I conjure you, O Persians, in the name of the gods who protect the throne, and especially those of you who are Achæmenids, never to permit the government to revert to the Medes. If they have seized it by craft, you must recover it by craft; if they have seized it by force, you must recover it by force. If you act thus may the blessings of Ormuzd be

with you; may the earth bring forth her increase, may your wives and flocks be fruitful, and may you remain free for ever. But if you do not thus, may the curses of Ahriman attend you; may the earth be unfruitful, your wives and flocks be barren, and yourselves be slaves, and may such an end befall every Persian as has befallen me."

When Cambyses had thus spoken he deplored his whole fortunes, and all the Persians seeing him weep, rent their clothes, and gave themselves up to abundant lamentations. Soon afterwards the king's thigh bone became infected and mortification ensued; and at last he died, B. C. 523, having reigned seven years and five months, and leaving behind him no family, male or female.

CHAP. XLIII.

HISTORY OF PERSIA, B.C. 523—447.

REIGN OF SMERDIS THE MAGIAN. — DISCOVERY OF THE IMPOSTURE. — CONSPIRACY OF THE SEVEN. — ENERGY OF DARIUS HYSTASPIS. — LAST SPEECH AND SUICIDE OF PREXASPES. — SMERDIS AND HIS BROTHER SLAIN. — MASSACRE OF THE MAGIANS. — ACCESSION OF DARIUS TO THE PERSIAN THRONE, B.C. 523. — SUBVERSION OF THE MAGIAN HERESY. — RELIGIOUS TOLERATION. — BABYLONIAN REVOLT. — NINETEEN MONTHS' SIEGE. — DESPERATE SCHEME OF ZOPYRUS. — BABYLON TAKEN BY DARIUS. — EMPIRE OF DARIUS. — GREECE. — STORY OF THE GREEK SURGEON, DEMOCEDES OF CROTONA — HIS EXTRAORDINARY ADVENTURES — RESIDENCE AT SUSA — INTRIGUES TO BE SENT TO GREECE AS A SPY — ESCAPES TO CROTONA. — IONIAN REVOLT, B.C. 503-498. — BATTLE OF MARATHON, B.C. 490. — PREPARATIONS FOR A GRAND EXPEDITION AGAINST GREECE. — DISPUTE CONCERNING THE SUCCESSION. — DEATH OF DARIUS B.C. 485. — ACCESSION OF XERXES. — LEADS AN IMMENSE ARMY AGAINST GREECE. — APPEARANCE OF THE HOST DURING THE MARCH. — TEARS OF XERXES. — FAILURE OF THE EXPEDITION. — DEATH OF XERXES, B.C. 465. — ACCESSION OF ARTAXERXES LONGIMANUS.

SMERDIS the Magian reigned in peace over the Medo-Persian empire for the space of seven months. The Persians generally believed in his identity with Smerdis, the brother of Cambyses; and even those who had attended the bedside of the dying monarch considered that the story told by Cambyses was a lying calumny intended to excite the enmity of the Persian nation against his successor. Moreover, Prexaspes vehemently denied that he had killed the true Smerdis; for if he had confessed that he was guilty of the murder of the brother of Cambyses, he would have excited the anger of the Persians by his crime and of the Magians by his ill-timed confession. Meantime, the false Smerdis treated all his subjects with the utmost beneficence. He proclaimed through-

out the empire a general exemption from the performance of military service and from the payment of tribute for the space of three years; and thus, at his subsequent death, every nation in the empire mourned his loss excepting the dominant Persians.

At last, in the eighth month of his reign, the imposture was discovered. Otanes, one of the noblest and wealthiest of the Persians, had suspected the Magian king from the very first, because the latter had never summoned any of the Persian nobles to his presence. Phædima, the daughter of Otanes, had been previously married to Cambyses, and when Smerdis the Magian ascended the throne, she, with all the other wives of the deceased king, became the wife of the new sovereign. Accordingly Otanes sent to his daughter to ask her whether her new husband was Smerdis the brother of Cambyses, or some other individual. She replied that she had never seen the brother of Cambyses, and therefore could not possibly say who her present husband was. Otanes desired her to ask Atossa, another of the royal wives, who had been well acquainted with the true Smerdis. She replied that she never saw Atossa, for that directly the new king, whoever he was, had ascended the throne, he stopped all communication between the royal wives by assigning to each of them separate apartments. Otanes was now more than ever convinced that there was some imposture. He sent a third message to his daughter, desiring her to ascertain if her husband had ears; for if he had, he was Smerdis, the brother of Cambyses, but if he had not, he was Smerdis the Magian, whose ears had been cut off some years previously by the great Cyrus. Phædima soon discovered the fact that the king had no ears, and at once communicated the important intelligence to her father.

Otanes now took five of the noblest Persians into his counsels; but whilst the six were still deliberating, Darius, the son of Hystaspes, arrived at Susa from Persia,

where his father was governor. Darius was immediately admitted into the confederacy, and the seven met together, and having exchanged pledges began to hold a conference. At last the turn came for Darius to express his opinion, and he addressed his confederates as follows: "I thought I was the only man who knew that the true Smerdis was dead, and that Smerdis the Magian was king. I therefore came to Susa for the very purpose of contriving the Magian's death. Since, however, you also are acquainted with the truth, I propose that we proceed at once to action, for no advantage whatever can be obtained by delay."

"Son of Hystaspes," said Otanes, "you are a worthy son of a noble father; but let us be cautious and increase our numbers before we fairly commit ourselves."

"Delay," cried Darius, "will ruin us all; for some one is certain to discover our plot to the Magian for the sake of his own private advantage. Indeed, you ought to have carried out your project before; but since you have taken me into your counsels, I tell you we must act immediately. I give you fair warning, that if this day passes over like yesterday, no one shall be beforehand with me and become my accuser; for I will at once go to the Magian and denounce you and your conspiracy."

Otanes then gave way, and merely asked how they were to enter the palace and attack the two brothers, as guards were stationed at every doorway.

Darius replied at length. "There are many things," he said, "that cannot be explained by words, but only by actions. Be assured that we shall find no difficulty in passing the guards. In the first place, they will not attempt to stop men of our rank; and in the second, I intend to say that I have just arrived from Persia with a most important message from my father the governor. Those of the doorkeepers who suffer us to pass without trouble shall be rewarded in due time; but whoever

attempts to oppose us must instantly be treated as an enemy; and when we have forced our passage we must accomplish our work."

Another of the seven named Gobryas supported the proposition of Darius. "We cannot," he said, "have a better opportunity for recovering the sovereign power, or of dying in the attempt. At present we who are Persians are governed by a cropped-eared Magian, who is a Mede. Some of us can well remember the dying curses which Cambyses pronounced against the Persians, if they did not attempt the recovery of the sovereignty. Then, indeed, we disbelieved his story, but now we have no longer any excuse. I therefore give my voice that we follow the counsel of Darius, and that on breaking up this conference we go at once to the palace and nowhere else."

Whilst this very deliberation was going on, a most important event was transpiring at the palace. The two Magians, Smerdis and his brother Patizeithes, had determined to make Prexaspes their friend, for he had suffered grievous wrong from Cambyses in the loss of his son; and he alone knew of the death of the real Smerdis, and he was also in high repute with the Persian people. Accordingly they sent for Prexaspes, and endeavoured to win his friendship by gifts and promises; and when he had engaged to keep their secret, they proposed to assemble all the Persians under the walls of the palace, in order that he might ascend a tower and harangue them, and assure them that they were governed by Smerdis, the son of Cyrus and brother of Cambyses, and by no one else. Prexaspes assented. An immense crowd of Persians were assembled under the terraces of the palace. Prexaspes ascended one of the towers and commenced his harangue; but instead of declaring what the Magians had desired him, he began to describe the genealogy of Cyrus's family, the descent of the great king from Achæmenes, and the numerous benefits which Cyrus had conferred upon the Persians.

The attention of the vast audience was now fixed upon the speaker. The Magians began to be alarmed. Suddenly Prexaspes disclosed the great secret that he himself had slain the brother of Cambyses, and that Smerdis the Magian reigned over the Medes and Persians. He then solemnly pronounced the bitterest curses against the Persians if they did not recover the sovereignty, and punish the Magians according to their deserts; and throwing himself headlong from the tower, he fell a shattered corpse at the feet of the assembled multitude.

Meantime the seven Persians, having offered up their prayers to the gods, were proceeding towards the palace to attack the Magians, when they were informed of the extraordinary confession and awful suicide of Prexaspes. Again they stopped to confer together; again Otanes advised that the enterprise should be deferred; but was again hotly opposed by Darius. In the midst of the dispute seven pairs of hawks were seen in the air pursuing two pairs of vultures and plucking and tearing them. The seven conspirators at once received it as a good omen, and giving way to Darius, proceeded forthwith to the palace. The guards at the palace gates, knowing their high rank, suffered them to pass without question. On reaching the hall, however, the eunuchs who were appointed to carry messages to the king, inquired their errand, and at the same time threatened the doorkeepers, and opposed the further progress of the seven. The conspirators exhorted each other, and, drawing their dirks, stabbed all who attempted to stop them, and rushed towards the royal presence chamber. The two Magians at that very moment were consulting upon the conduct of Prexaspes. Hearing the outcry, they hurried out into the hall and put themselves on the defensive. One of them snatched up a bow and the other a javelin, and soon came to close quarters with the seven. The Magian with the javelin wounded one of the conspirators in the thigh, and thrust out the

eye of another before he was overpowered and slain. The Magian with the bow found his weapon useless in so close an engagement. Accordingly he rushed into an adjoining chamber intending to shut the door, but two of the seven, Darius and Gobryas, dashed in with him. The apartment had no windows, and whilst Gobryas grappled with the Magian, Darius stood by in great perplexity, fearing to assist his friend lest he should strike him in the dark. Gobryas was at last overpowered. "Never mind me," he cried, "drive your dirk through both of us." Darius obeyed, and fortunately stabbed the Magian to the heart without injuring his comrade.

The two wounded conspirators now remained to keep the command of the palace. The five others cut off the heads of the two Magians and carried them out with shouts and clamour, calling upon every Persian they met to aid them in destroying the Magian tribe. A general massacre of the Magians ensued, and if night had not come on not a single Magian would have been left alive. For ever afterwards the day was observed by the Persians as a solemn festival under the name of "the slaughter of the Magians," and during the celebration no one of the tribe was allowed to be seen in the streets.

Five days after the overthrow of the Magian rule the seven assembled together to decide upon what should be the future government of the empire. One proposed a democracy, a second an oligarchy, and a third a monarchy; and a traditionary account of their speeches has already been given in a former chapter.* Otanes, the originator of the conspiracy, proposed a democracy, and Darius, the son of Hystaspes, proposed a monarchy. Four out of the seven were for the monarchy. Otanes, seeing himself overruled, then spoke as follows: "Associates, I see that one of us seven must be made king, but I beg to decline

* See Chap. XXI.

all competition with you, and to give up all claim to the government, on condition that I and my descendants be regarded as unamenable to all future sovereigns of Persia." The six agreed to these terms, and Otanes withdrew from the assembly; and his family alone, of all the families in Persia, retained their liberty to a very late period of Persian history, yielding obedience to the reigning monarch only so far as they pleased, and being amenable to nothing save the fundamental laws of the Persians.

The remaining six conspirators then deliberated upon the choice of a sovereign. First of all, however, they determined that whoever out of the six should be appointed king, should give a Median vest every year to Otanes, together with such presents as were accounted most honourable among the Persians. This was to be done as an acknowledgment of his services in setting the conspiracy on foot, and in assisting in the enterprise. Secondly, they agreed that any one of the seven should have the right of entering the palace at any time, and that the king, whoever he might happen to be, should only marry out of the families of the seven. Thirdly, they agreed that they would take a ride through the suburbs at sunrise, and that he whose horse first neighed should have the kingdom. The horse of Darius neighed first upon the occasion, upon which the five others immediately dismounted and did obeisance to him as their king, B.C. 523.

Darius, the son of Hystaspes, was himself an Achæmenid and a lineal descendant of the Persian kings. He seems, therefore, to have been at once acknowledged by the Persians as their new sovereign. The first act of his reign was to put down the Magian heresy. He prohibited the practice of the heretical Magian rites which had been recently introduced. He restored the chants and ritual belonging to the orthodox worship of Ormuzd, established by Zoroaster. He reinstated those Magian

families who had been deprived of their sacerdotal office by the recent government, on account of their adhesion to the reformed doctrines of the Persian prophet. When, however, he had firmly established the supremacy of himself and party, he adopted a system of religious toleration. He avoided the fanatical intolerance of Cambyses, and seemed to revert to the mild religious policy of the great Cyrus. But the age was not yet ripe for religious liberty. The foul idolatries which polluted the ancient world were only to be put down by fire and sword. The priests of Baal were slaughtered at Kishon, in the presence of the prophet Elijah. The corrupt Magians were spared by the toleration of Darius, and the next reign saw the most horrible rites in the Magian superstition practised by the court of Xerxes.

Not long after the accession of Darius the great city of Babylon broke out into open revolt. The insurrection was of a very dangerous and obstinate character. During the reign of Smerdis the Magian, and the confusion which attended his overthrow, the Babylonians had secretly stored their city with provisions, and made every preparation for a protracted siege. Their determination was shown at the very outset by an act of almost unprecedented barbarity. Every man kept his own mother together with a woman to be his wife, but the remaining population were put to death in order to economise the provisions. Darius assembled his forces and commenced besieging the city, but the stupendous walls defied all his attacks. The Babylonians mounted their ramparts and assailed him with derisive language. He tried every artifice he could conceive, but all to no purpose. He turned off the waters of the Euphrates, as Cyrus had done previously; but the walls along the banks of the river were so powerfully manned that the stratagem was of no effect.

Nineteen months thus passed away, and the city appeared to be as unassailable as ever. At last, in the

twentieth month, a general of incomparable zeal formed a plan for taking the city. His name was Zopyrus. He was of the very highest rank, and, indeed, was a son of one of the six conspirators; and though his plan entailed the most grievous sufferings upon himself, yet he resolved to endure them in the hopes of obtaining the great glory of such an achievement. He first of all inflicted upon himself an irremediable mutilation. He cut off his nose and ears, and cropped his hair in the most disgraceful manner, and then gave himself a severe scourging, in order to appear like a criminal who had just escaped from the hands of justice. In this guise he presented himself to Darius. The king started from his throne on beholding a man of such a high rank so grievously mutilated, and eagerly demanded who had done it, and for what cause? Zopyrus replied at length. "O king," he said, "there is no man upon earth, excepting yourself, who has the power of treating me thus. I have inflicted these wounds with my own hand, and without consulting you, lest you should have forbidden me. In this condition I will desert to the Babylonians, and tell them that I have been thus treated by your commands. When I have persuaded them that such is really the case, I hope to obtain the command of the Babylonian army. Meantime do you act as follows. On the tenth day after I have entered the city do you station a thousand of your worst troops against the Semiramis gate. Again, on the seventh day after the tenth, station two thousand more against the Nineveh gate. Again, twenty days after that, station four thousand more against the Chaldæan gate. Let, however, neither of these divisions be armed with any other weapon excepting the sword. After the twentieth day command your entire army to invest the city walls on all sides, but station the Persians at the Belidian and Cissian gates, with orders to obey my commands."

Zopyrus then left the royal presence, and went to one of

the gates of Babylon, as if he were a deserter. The guard seeing him from the ramparts, ran down and opened a door of the gate a little way, and asked him who he was, and for what purpose he came. He replied that he was a Persian general, named Zopyrus, who had deserted to the Babylonians because of the injuries he had received from Darius. "These wounds," he added, "were inflicted upon me because I advised that the siege should be raised; I therefore come to you in order that I may be the greatest blessing to the Babylonians and the greatest curse to Darius and the Persians."

The Babylonians, seeing a noble Persian deprived of his ears and nose, and covered with stripes and blood, at once believed his story, and readily gave him what he asked, namely, the command of their forces. Having obtained this appointment, he acted according to the plan which he had arranged with Darius. On the tenth day he led out his army and surrounded and cut to pieces the thousand men at the Semiramis gate, and thus obtained the increased confidence of the Babylonians. On the seventh day afterwards he surrounded and slaughtered the two thousand men at the Nineveh gate; and his praises were now in the mouths of all the Babylonians who had witnessed the action from their ramparts. Twenty-days afterwards he attacked and slew the four thousand men at the Chaldæan gate. By this last action he became everything to the Babylonians, and was made commander-in-chief of the entire army of the besieged, and supreme guardian of the walls.

At last Zopyrus executed his design. When Darius invested the wall all round, according to the agreement, the Babylonians repelled him as before; but Zopyrus opened the Cissian and Belidian gates, and led the Persians within the wall. The Babylonians who saw what was done fled to the temple of Belus; but those who did

not see the treachery remained at their posts until they were betrayed.

Thus was Babylon taken a second time, and Darius took care to demolish those impregnable defences which Cyrus had previously left comparatively uninjured. The walls were broken down, the gates were carried away, and three thousand of the principal citizens were barbarously put to death in cold blood. Zopyrus gained universal fame. He was regarded as the greatest Persian who had ever lived, Cyrus alone excepted. In the opinion of Darius none ever had or ever could surpass him in great achievements; and it was reported that the king frequently declared that he would rather Zopyrus had never been injured than have acquired twenty Babylons. Every year Zopyrus was presented with those gifts which were most prized by the Persians, and the government of Babylon was assigned to him for the remainder of his life, free from the payment of any tribute to the imperial treasury.

The conquests of Darius now extended in every direction, but their history is almost totally unknown. He finished the canal from Egypt to the Red Sea, which had been previously commenced by Necho. He sent out an exploring expedition under Scylax of Caryanda, which embarked on the Indus near the city of Cabul, and sailed down the river to the Indian Ocean, and from thence returned up the Red Sea to the port near Suez, after a voyage of thirty months. His empire stretched from the Sahara Desert and the Ægean Sea to the banks of the Jaxartes and Indus; and he divided the whole into twenty satrapies, and settled the amount of tribute to be paid by each. Distant nations beyond his frontiers likewise sent him yearly gifts of their best productions. The Ethiopians beyond the Cataracts of the Nile sent him every third year two gallons of unmolten gold, 200 blocks of ebony, and twenty large elephant tusks. The Colchians and other

nations bordering on the Caucasus sent him every year 500 male slaves and 500 female; and the Arabians of the far south likewise sent every year twenty-five tons of frankincense. The whole annual revenue of his empire is said to have been 14,560 talents of silver, which, however, is only equal to 3,640,000*l.* sterling.

The incidents connected with the expedition of Darius against the Scythians of Southern Russia have already been narrated; so likewise have been some of those connected with the Ionian revolt. It was this monarch, however, who first seriously contemplated the conquest of European Greece, and it will therefore be interesting to run over the principal facts connected with this hostile feeling against Hellas.

The Greeks who occupied the western coast of Asia Minor had, as we have already stated*, been first subdued by Crœsus the Lydian, and then by Cyrus the Persian. With the exception of a taunt levelled at the Spartans, Cyrus never came into contact with European Greece, and his son Cambyses was so much engaged in extending his conquests in Egypt and Ethiopia, that the Persian satraps of Asia Minor alone came into communication with the Greek cities. Whilst Cambyses was lying mortally wounded in Syria, Orœtes, the Persian satrap of Lydia, treacherously invited Polycrates, the tyrant of Samos, to Sardis, and there put him to death. During the reign of Smerdis the Magian this Orœtes was guilty of many atrocities, and refused to espouse the cause of the Persians; and consequently when Darius ascended the throne, he was deposed from his satrapy and put to death, and all his effects and slaves were removed to Susa.†

Soon after this event, an accident happened to Darius. Like all the Persian kings, he was much addicted to the pleasures of the chase; and chancing on one occasion to

* See Chaps. XXXIX. and XL.

† These events have already been narrated at length in Chap. IV.

leap from his horse whilst hunting, he twisted his foot with such violence as to dislocate his ankle bone. The Egyptian surgeons were at once summoned, for their reputation was very great, and ever since the conquest of Egypt by Cambyses a number of them had been kept at the Persian court. On the present occasion, however, they exhibited very little skill, for they twisted the foot with so much force as to increase the inflammation; and for seven days and seven nights the king was unable to sleep from the intensity of the pain. On the eighth day the foot continued in a very bad state. At last some one remembered that Democedes of Crotona, a very celebrated physician, had accompanied Polycrates to Sardis, and been subsequently treated as a slave by Orœtes; and that when the slaves and treasures of Orœtes had been removed to Susa, Democedes had been removed with them. Darius was speedily made acquainted with the reputed skill of Democedes, and ordered him to be brought to the palace. The physician was found amongst the slaves of Orœtes, utterly neglected, clothed in rags, and loaded with fetters. On being taken into the royal presence he was asked by Darius if he knew anything of the healing art; but he, being afraid of being kept a prisoner for life, denied all knowledge of surgery. Darius, however, saw at a glance that he was dissembling, and ordered his servants to bring whips and goads. Democedes saw that deceit was useless, and confessed that having been intimate with a physician, he possessed some little knowledge of the art. Darius then placed himself under the care of the Crotonian doctor, and was soon restored to health, though he had previously despaired of ever recovering the use of his foot. For this service he presented the doctor with two pair of golden fetters; but Democedes asked if his evils were to be doubled because of his success. The king was so pleased with this remark that he sent the doctor to the royal ladies with the message that he was the man who

had saved his life. Each lady accordingly dipped a goblet into a chest of gold coins and presented it to Democedes; and such was the munificence of the gift, that the doctor's servant made a fortune by picking up the pieces which fell from the goblets.

This Democedes had previously met with some extraordinary adventures. He had left his native place, Crotona, in Italy, because of the severity with which he had been treated by his father. Subsequently, he had settled at Ægina, and practised as a physician and surgeon; and in the very first year, though totally unprovided with the necessary instruments, he surpassed the best medical men in the island. In the second year the Æginetans retained him by paying him a talent, or about 250*l.* sterling, out of the public treasury. In the third year the Athenians obtained him by paying him one talent and forty minas, or about 400*l.* sterling. In the fourth year Polycrates, the tyrant of Samos, bought him over by the payment of two talents, or 500*l.* sterling. From Samos, as we have seen, he went to Sardis, and was thence carried to Susa. So great was his fame, that during the time he flourished the physicians of Crotona were said to be the best in all Hellas, and those of Cyrene the second best.

After Democedes had been so successful in curing the king's ankle, he had a very large house at Susa, and a constant seat at the king's table; indeed, he had nothing to wish for, excepting the liberty of returning to Greece. His influence upon Darius was likewise very great. He obtained the royal pardon for the Egyptian physicians who were condemned to death for being outdone by a Greek practitioner; and he procured the liberty of some unfortunate prophet of Elis, who had, like himself, accompanied Polycrates to Sardis, and lain neglected at Susa amongst the slaves of Orœtes.

Some few months afterwards, one of the king's wives, named Atossa, was troubled by a tumour on her breast,

which at length became so troublesome, that she was obliged to send for Democedes. The doctor engaged to cure her, but exacted a boon in return. Accordingly, when she was restored to health, he requested her to urge Darius to make war upon the Greeks. Darius had a great esteem for Atossa, who was a daughter of the celebrated Cyrus; when therefore she advised him to make war upon the Grecks, he resolved on sending Democedes, accompanied by some Persians as spies, to visit the Greek cities, and make a report. Democedes thus succeeded in returning to his native land. He was despatched with fifteen eminent Persians, loaded with presents for his father and brothers, but pledged to return to Susa when the report should be completed. The party proceeded by land to the ancient city of Sidon, in Phœnicia, and there manned two war ships, and freighted a large merchantman with the presents and other valuables. From thence they sailed towards European Greece, and, keeping to the shore, they surveyed the whole of the Greek coasts, and made their notes in writing. At last they proceeded to the Tarentine gulf in Southern Italy, and landed at the town of Tarentum. Here the king of the Tarentines, out of kindness towards Democedes, took away the rudders from the ships, and imprisoned the Persians as spies. Democedes himself then went to Crotona, which was on the opposite side of the gulf; and when he had reached his native city in safety, the Tarentine king liberated the Persians, and gave them back their ships and rudders. The Persians sailed away to Crotona, where they found Democedes in the public market, and immediately laid hands on him. Some of the citizens were ready to deliver him up, out of fear of the Persian power. Others, however, fell upon the foreigners with their staves, and, in spite of threats and expostulations, gave them a sound thrashing, and rescued the doctor. The merchant vessel, and all its valuables, was likewise detained, and the Per-

sians were obliged to return at once to Asia, for, being deprived of their guide, they could not attempt any farther exploration. When they were leaving Crotona, Democedes desired them to tell Darius that the daughter of Milo the wrestler was affianced to him as his wife; for the name of Milo was well known to the Persian king, and the doctor wished to be thought a man of consequence in his own country. The Persians were subsequently wrecked off Iapygia, and reduced to slavery, but were ransomed by a Tarentine exile named Gillus, and conducted in safety to Darius. These were the first Persians who ever went from Asia to Greece, and on that occasion they went as spies.

About this time Darius restored Syloson to Samos, in gratitude for the scarlet cloak given him at Memphis. He likewise made his celebrated expedition to Scythia. But these circumstances we have already recorded at length. In B. C. 504 the Asiatic Greeks revolted from the Persian rule, and were assisted by the Athenians; but in B. C. 498, the insurrection was completely suppressed. Darius then prepared to take revenge upon the Athenians; but in B. C. 490, his generals met with a terrible defeat at Marathon, and were compelled to return to Asia. Darius, more than ever determined to prosecute the war against European Greece, spent three years in raising levies of men from all parts of his empire, together with ships, horses, corn, and transports. In the fourth year, however, the Egyptians revolted. Darius then resolved on marching against both Greeks and Egyptians; but, according to the Persian customs, was obliged to nominate his successor before setting out, and a violent discussion arose between his sons concerning the sovereignty. Darius, before his accession to the throne, had three sons born to him by a former wife, the daughter of Gobryas; after his accession he had four other sons by Atossa, the daughter of Cyrus. The eldest son in the first family was named Artabazanes;

the eldest son in the second family was named Xerxes. The struggle was between these two princes. Artabazanes based his claim upon the fact that he was the eldest son of Darius. On the other hand, Xerxes based his claim upon the fact that he was the eldest son of Darius and Atossa, and Atossa was the daughter of that Cyrus who had liberated the Persians and founded their empire. At this very juncture Demaratus, the exiled king of Sparta*, chanced to come to Susa, and having heard of the dispute, went to Xerxes, and furnished him with an additional argument in favour of his claim. Xerxes, thus instructed, placed his case once more before his father. "Artabazanes," he said, "is only the eldest son of Darius, a private person, for he was born before you came to the throne. I, on the other hand, am the eldest son of Darius the king; for I was born whilst you were in the enjoyment of the sovereignty." Darius admitted this argument to be just, and at once appointed Xerxes to be his successor.

Everything was now made ready for the great expedition, when death suddenly intervened. The relentless god, sternly regardless of all mortal schemes, placed his icy hand on the Great King, and carried him away on the eve of conquest and of glory. Darius died in B.C. 485, the year before Herodotus was born, after a long reign of thirty-six years.

Xerxes, the son of Darius and Atossa, succeeded to the Persian throne in accordance with his father's nomination. In the first year of his reign he reconquered Egypt, and reduced it to a greater servitude than ever. He then gave the government of the satrapy to his brother Achæmenes, the same who was slain twenty-four years afterwards by Inarus, the Libyan, in the revolt of B.C. 460. Next he employed four whole

* See Chap. XI.

years in assembling fresh forces from all parts of his immense empire, and in providing everything necessary for a mighty expedition into Europe, which should trample into dust the pride and liberties of Hellas. The arrangements were upon an enormous scale. The army was to march over the sea at the Hellespont. The fleet was to sail through the divided mountain of Athos. At length everything was ready; and the land forces having assembled in the neighbourhood of Sardis, commenced their march towards the Hellespont. The baggage-bearers and beasts of burden led the van. Next came a host of various nations, promiscuously mingled, and in every variety of costume. There were the Medes and Persians in their turban-like caps, loose trousers, and splendid uniforms of various colours, defended by breastplates of metal scales, and bucklers of osiers faced with leather, and armed with the bow, the dagger, and the javelin. There were the Babylonians, with their cuirasses of wadded linen, and helmets of brazen network, carrying the shield, the spear, and the dagger, but, above all, armed with the terrible club of wood knotted with iron. There, likewise, were the Indians from beyond the Indus, habited in their cotton garments; the Beloochees, in their wild headdress, formed of the skin of a horse's head, with the erect ears and the plumelike mane; the Ethiopians of the Upper Nile, clothed in the skins of lions and of panthers; the mountaineers of Asia Minor and Armenia, in wooden helmets and goat-skin cloaks; the Libyans, drawn in war-chariots of four horses; the Arabs, mounted on patient and enduring camels; nomad hordes of Tartary, unarmed with brass or iron, but bearing their rude lassoes, to catch their enemy as they would their prey. Ever and anon, too, might be seen in the confused mass a corps of Asiatic Greeks, forced by a despotic power to march against their European brethren. This promiscuous host formed the half of the entire army. Next followed, after a certain

interval, the household troops of the Persians. Of these, 1000 chosen horsemen, in rich Persian uniforms, led the van. Then came 1000 chosen spearmen, carrying their spears with the point downwards, whilst the other extremity terminated with a golden pomegranate. First behind these troops walked ten Nisæan horses, sacred to the Sun, of vast power, and splendidly caparisoned. Next came the sacred Chariot of the Sun, drawn by eight white horses; but as no man was ever permitted to ascend it, the charioteer walked behind with the reins in his hand. The chariot of Xerxes, drawn by magnificent Nisæan horses, and driven by a Persian of noble birth, followed the Chariot of the Sun; but whenever the king pleased he passed from the chariot and entered a litter which was carried near it. Immediately about the royal carriages were a chosen body of 1000 royal horse guards and 1000 royal foot guards, consisting of the bravest and noblest of the Persians, and having golden apples at the reverse extremity of their spears. The rear of the household troops was brought up by 10,000 foot, followed by 10,000 cavalry. The 10,000 foot were called the Immortals, because their number was always exactly maintained; 9000 of them carried spears, with pomegranates of silver at the reverse extremity, whilst the remaining 1000 were placed all round the others, and carried spears with pomegranates of gold. An empty space of a quarter of a mile was preserved at the rear of the household troops, and then followed the remainder of the army in a promiscuous throng, like the confused mass which formed the van.

Beside this overwhelming land army, a fleet of 1200 war ships, and 1800 horse transports and corn ships, sailed along the coast. The sum total of the combined forces has been estimated by millions; and the land troops and sumpter beasts alone are said to have often drained an entire river during a single encampment. At Abydos, Xerxes

surveyed the entire armament from a white marble throne, but is said to have wept at the thought that not a solitary man then present would be alive in a hundred years.

It is not our purpose to describe the progress of this mighty expedition over the Hellespont, through Thrace and Macedonia, into the interior of Greece. The Magians who attended the king seem to have taken advantage of his superstitious fears for the safety of so vast a force, to practise some of the most abominable rites in the heretical ritual; for, besides the numerous charms and incantations which they performed during the march, they buried alive on the banks of the Strymon, nine sons and nine daughters of the natives in honour of Ahriman, the deity of darkness, who reigned in the under-world. At length the army passed the Greek frontier. Now commenced the mighty struggle. All Asia had united in one endless array to crush the states of Greece. Her army had bridged the seas; her navy had sailed through mountains. But Greece recked not the overwhelming odds, but fiercely stood at bay, like a lioness fighting for her cubs. The proud and stubborn hearts of Hellas arose amid anxiety, terror, confusion, and despair. They staked their lives and homes against the despot, and heaven sympathised with their struggles. In the pass of Thermopylæ and off the shores of Artemisium, they fell as martyrs to their country and their gods. Then came the glorious day at Salamis. Xerxes fled back to Susa like a frightened deer, but his general still remained. Last of all were the never-to-be-forgotten deeds at Platæa and Mycale. Hellas obtained victory and revenge. The Persian armies were trodden to the dust; her fleets were scattered to the winds.

Xerxes lived fifteen years after his expedition against Greece, but the events of this period occupy no space on the page of Persian history. Luxury and voluptuousness had already enervated the old military spirit of the Persian

court, and Xerxes readily yielded to their influence. At last he fell a victim to a palace conspiracy, and was murdered in the year B. C. 465, after a reign of twenty years. He was succeeded by his son Artaxerxes, who was surnamed Longimanus, because his right hand was longer than his left. This prince was apparently the same as the Ahasuerus of Esther and the Artaxerxes of Nehemiah; but as he was the reigning monarch at the time of Herodotus's visit to Susa, we shall postpone our account of him to a future chapter.

CHAP. XLIV.

SUSA AND PERSEPOLIS, B. C. 447—446.

HERODOTUS REACHES SUSA.—SITUATION OF PASARGADA AND PERSEPOLIS. —GARDEN AND PARKLIKE SCENERY.—PRESENT REMAINS OF PERSEPOLIS.—HERODOTUS PROCEEDS TO PERSEPOLIS.—MAGNIFICENT EDIFICES. —DESCRIPTION OF THE PALACES OF PERSEPOLIS.—TERRACES AND STEPS.—WINGED BULLS.—ARROW-HEAD INSCRIPTION.—BIRTHDAY OF ARTAXERXES.—SACRIFICES TO THE RISING SUN.—HALL OF XERXES.—APPEARANCE OF KING ARTAXERXES.—BIRTHDAY PRESENTS.—ROYAL BANQUET.—HERODOTUS RECEIVES A MEDIAN DRESS.—AUDIENCE WITH THE GREAT KING IN THE HALL OF HUNDRED COLUMNS.—HERODOTUS ACCOMPLISHES HIS MISSION.—MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE PERSIANS.—RESPECT FOR VALOUR.—STORY OF ARTAYNTES.—EDUCATION OF BOYS.—PUNISHMENT OF UNJUST JUDGES.—INCREASING LUXURY OF THE PERSIANS.—RELIGIOUS RITES AND CEREMONIES.—MAGIAN PRACTICES.—FUNERALS.—DESCRIPTION OF THE TOMB OF CYRUS AT PASARGADA.—PERSIAN IDEAS OF THE SOUL AFTER DEATH.—RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

HERODOTUS reached the great city of Susa or Shushan, on the river Choaspes, in the summer of B. C. 447, but learned that the great king Artaxerxes Longimanus had left his palace at Susa a few days previously, and proceeded with his court to offer sacrifice at the tombs of his fathers at Pasargada and Persepolis. This last place lay more than three hundred miles to the south-east of Susa, and Pasargada lay about fifty miles to the north-east of Persepolis. Herodotus, however, was both anxious to fulfil his mission, and curious to behold the splendid sepulchres and palaces of the Persian kings; and he therefore determined to proceed at once to Persepolis and deliver his credentials.

Pasargada, which contained the sepulchre of Cyrus, was situated in the plain of Mourghab; Persepolis, which con-

tained the tombs of his successors, was situated in the plain of Merdasht. The plain of Mourghab is watered by the river Cyrus or Pulwan, which falls into the Araxes or Bendamir. The river Bendamir in its turn waters the plain of Merdasht, and then empties itself into a lake not far from the modern city of Shiraz.

In the time of our traveller these well watered and extensive plains presented the appearance of gardens. For miles the country was brought by artificial means to the highest pitch of cultivation. Nature not only yielded up her fruits as a generous mother, but appeared as richly arrayed and perfumed as an oriental bride. Flowers of every shape and hue, even to the choicest exotics, pleased the eye and filled the air with incense. The scenery was a happy mixture of the garden, the park, and the forest; whilst the Persian taste was gratified by the singing of countless birds, the murmuring of silver fountains, and the presence of wild and wondrous animals, sent as presents from every quarter of the immense empire.

The remains of Persepolis can still be identified. The magnificent ruins sometimes called Chehil-Menar, or the "Forty Pillars," and sometimes denominated Takhti-Jemshid, or the "Throne of Jemshid," are undoubtedly the relics of the once famous palaces of Darius and of Xerxes; whilst the excavated chambers in the rocky hills in the neighbourhood have been regarded as the sepulchres of the successors of Cyrus. But how have the mighty fallen! How hath the golden city ceased! The screech owl screams and the spider weaves her web in the festive halls of the sons of Jemshid; and wolves and jackalls prowl where once the jewelled dresses of royal beauties wafted oriental fragrance through the pictured rooms.

Herodotus and other illustrious ambassadors were escorted by a troop of royal guards from Susa to Persepolis. Their road lay through parks and gardens. It was the

season of roses, the joyous month when the queen of flowers throws off the chilly garments of winter and spring, and, blushingly offering her fair cheek to her countless lovers, yields up her perfumed loveliness to their raptured gaze. The clear blue sky of Persia, the radiant sunshine, the luxurious foliage, the abundant flowers, the sparkling of streams, the singing of birds, the prancing of horses, the politeness of the Persian guards, and the jests and merriment which enlivened the way—all united to fill our traveller's heart with gladness, and to excite him with bright hopes of a favourable termination of his mission.

At last the magnificent edifices of Persepolis burst upon his astonished gaze, and seemed to light up the glorious landscape like palaces of rainbows. The gold and colours which sparkled upon the walls and pillars, were brilliantly starred by the gorgeous hues of the setting sun, and richly set off by the clear blue sky and verdant hills which formed the background of the unrivalled picture. The scene was beyond all conception. His highest visions of the gardens of the Hesperides and Islands of the Blessed were surpassed by the splendid realities which surrounded the throne of Jemshid.

Before the night had fairly set in Herodotus and his fellow-travellers were comfortably lodged near the walls, and soon discovered that they had arrived at a most critical moment. That day week was the birthday of Artaxerxes, when the presents from the different satrapies would be submitted to the Great King, and the most extensive festivities would be celebrated in honour of the event. This, then, would be a favourable opportunity for all envoys to lay their gifts at the feet of the mighty sovereign, who would doubtless in a few days afterwards admit them to an audience in the imperial divan.

Whilst Herodotus is preparing his presents for this important occasion, it will be necessary for us to endeavour to describe the palaces of Persepolis as they were in the

days of Artaxerxes. These splendid edifices were seated upon a platform hewn out of the rock at the foot of a chain of mountains; and they rose in a succession of terraces, rising one above the other, and communicating with each other by broad marble staircases. The platform was 1500 feet from north to south, and from 800 to 900 feet from east to west. It was surrounded by a triple line of walls, of which the highest was 90 feet high; and these walls were most sumptuously adorned, and crowned with aspiring turrets. The platform itself was formed into three great terraces, which we can best describe by paying an imaginary visit to the spot; though in the days of the old Persian monarchy none but Persians of the noblest birth or ambassadors on important missions were ever permitted to pass through the brazen gates.

We, however, will ascend the grand marble staircase leading from the plain to the northern terrace of the great platform. This terrace is thirty-five feet above the level of the plain. The magnificent staircase contains 103 steps; it is broad enough for ten horsemen to ride abreast, and its sides are covered with carved representations of men and things. Passing through the lofty brazen gates at its summit, we proceed along the platform, having the great portico leading to the Hall of Xerxes on our right hand. The portico consists of immense piers fifty feet high, supporting a roof of cedar. On each side are sculptured a pair of colossal bulls, fifteen feet high, to guard the entrance. Hitherto we have been dazzled by the gorgeous splendour of the walls and pillars; the glittering representations of royal pageants and religious mysteries, vividly painted in gold and colours, and brilliantly glazed and enamelled. But as we gaze on those winged bulls our minds are filled with strange and mysterious thoughts. The wings lie not flat backwards, as in the Assyrian examples, but the great feathers turn up in a bold and graceful curve. Above all, however, we are impressed with the

powerful development of force and grandeur of expression which the Persian and Assyrian artists knew well how to impart to animal forms, and which have never yet been matched in animal sculpture. These represent the primal bull whence came the clean animals mentioned in the Zendavestas as being at the head of the clean creation of Ormuzd.

We pass through the portico, and read the arrow-head inscription which declares it to be the work of Xerxes, and which has been thus translated by the learned Rawlinson:—

"The Great God Ormuzd, he it is who has given this world, who has given mankind, who has made Xerxes king, both king of the people and lawgiver of the people. I am Xerxes, the king, the great king, the king of kings, the king of the many peopled countries, the supporter also of the great world, the son of king Darius, the Achæmenid. Says Xerxes the king, by the grace of Ormuzd, I have made this public portal: there is many another noble work besides in this Persepolis which I have executed, and which my father has executed. Whatsoever noble works are to be seen, we have executed all of them by the grace of Ormuzd. Says Xerxes the king, may Ormuzd protect me and my empire. Both that which has been executed by me, and that which has been executed by my father, may Ormuzd protect it."*

Passing through the portico, we ascend another staircase of which the sides are adorned with appropriate relievos†; and thus we enter the Hall of Xerxes, in which the Great King received the tribute and gifts from his

* Rawlinson's Memoirs, in the tenth vol. of the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.

† The relievos here represent the processions of human figures bearing presents to the Great King; in the same way that the sculptures leading to the Hall of Hundred Columns represent the Great King giving an audience to an ambassador, &c. We need not describe the representations here, as we shall have presently to describe the realities, basing our description upon the sculptures.

various satrapies. Instead of capitals, the lofty columns are surmounted by the heads of griffins, but the hall itself is roofed with cedar. On our left is the Hall of Hundred Columns, in which the Great King gave audiences to ambassadors. Before us are the gorgeous palaces of Darius and Xerxes.

The morning of the birthday of Artaxerxes was ushered in with unclouded splendour. On the summit of the mountains which overlook Persepolis the Magians performed the sacrifices to the rising Sun, the mighty Ormuzd, the giver of life and light. The sovereign of Persia, the princes of the royal household, and the crowd of nobles, courtiers, and ministers, assembled in their rich variety of costumes to pay their adorations to the glorious deity. The sacrificing priests, with their turbans wreathed with myrtle, conducted the victims to the consecrated height. The hierophant invoked the great Ormuzd according to the Persian ritual, and prayed in piercing and deeply impressive tones for the prosperity of the Persians and their king. Then the victims were offered upon the tender grass. The clear morning air was filled with the fragrance of the incense. The solemn chants of the Magian singers arose in harmonious chorus to the throne of Ormuzd.

The day was to be spent in feasting and rejoicing. The sovereign was to receive the presents from his satraps, and confer his favours upon those who had done him service and deserved his notice. Herodotus and a crowd of other deputies from the different satrapies had assembled with their various gifts round the grand staircase leading to the platform of Persepolis, ready to be formed into procession, and ushered through the brazen gates into the great hall of Xerxes. The steps and terraces were crowded with guards and nobles in the most splendid costumes. There might be seen the fortunate courtiers who had received the Median or court dress of brilliant colours from the hands of their sovereign, and who had now

decked themselves in necklaces, armlets, and other rich ornaments of gold and jewels, in honour of the day. There were lords and generals in the old Persian uniform, with their splendid dirks on the right thigh, and deadly bows concealed in jewelled sheaths. There were the royal guards in scalelike armour, and bearing their glittering lances high in the clear blue air; and there too were the chosen attendants on the royal person, chosen especially for their beauty and bravery, and now carrying with princely pomp their golden-headed staves.

Suddenly the strains of martial music burst upon the ear. The Great King was leaving his palace for the hall of Xerxes. The mysterious ensigns and resplendent banners of the Medo-Persian monarchy sparkled joyously in the morning sunshine. A gorgeous canopy was borne over the head, and completely shrouded the tall and imposing form of the sublime king. On his head might have been seen the royal tiara. In his left hand was the golden sceptre; in his right hand was the sacred cup Havan, which was necessary for the royal libations to Ormuzd. Before him was carried the sacred fire, and likewise the burning incense in golden vessels richly chased. Behind him were his fan-bearer and other attendants. All around were princes and courtiers in jewelled dresses and long flowing perukes. The procession passed along the terraces, unseen by the ambassadors; and then the brazen gates were opened. The multitude of deputies were divided according to their nations and satrapies, each one standing at the head of the attendants, bearing his particular gifts, and preparing to be led by one of the officers of the court up the great staircase, and through the portico, guarded by the winged bulls, into the hall. The whole distance was lined with royal guards, whilst here and there were groups of nobles conversing together with their hands before their mouths, according to the strict requirements of Persian etiquette. At last the long

procession, loaded with the choicest productions of the earth, passed through the brazen gates, and were ushered into the grand hall of Xerxes. Blocks of ebony, enormous elephants' tusks of the whitest ivory, and large vessels filled with unmolten gold, from the swarthy tribes of Ethiopia; bales of the finest embroidered linens and curiously wadded cotton armour from the manufactories of Egypt; jars of the choicest wines from the best vintages of Asiatic Greece; amber, tin, and dyed garments, from Phœnicia; cedars from the forests of Lebanon; balm of Gilead from the vales of Galilee; white wools, and richly mounted daggers from Damascus; seal rings, costly perfumes, chased staves, splendid carpets, woven stuffs, and brilliantly coloured cottons, from the great city of Babylon; spices, frankincense, and myrrh from Arabia; pearls from the Persian Gulf; onyxes, emeralds, and jaspers from Bactria; soft furs from the Ural and Altaï mountains; gold-dust and gems from India; silks from China; and, in short, every rich or rare production and manufacture of every nation in the ancient world were there poured forth in endless profusion. The throne of the great king was veiled from the sight of the crowd of strangers; but as each officer ushered a particular deputy and his attendants into the hall, another officer proclaimed the name of the satrapy, or the titles of the donors, and then read aloud the list of all the gifts. Nor were such commodities as those recited the only presents to the Persian sovereign. Long strings of slaves of either sex, and of every complexion, were brought from distant climes for the royal service; and the terrace was covered with strange and wondrous animals and birds, to enrich the royal forests and gardens of that great monarch, who was styled in the hyperbolical language of the orientals, the king of kings and lord of all the nations of the earth.

In a short time Herodotus and the other foreign deputies were conducted back, utterly bewildered by the colossal

grandeur and unbounded riches which they had witnessed. Soon, however, they were called upon to join in the festivities of the day. Upon every anniversary of his birth the king Artaxerxes made a feast unto all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, being before him. And he made likewise a feast unto all the people that were present in the palaces at Persepolis, both unto great and small, in the pavilions of the court of the garden which surrounded the terraces. There were white, green, and blue hangings, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings, and pillars of marble; and the couches were of gold and silver, upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white and black marble. And the servants of the king gave the people royal wine in abundance, out of vessels of gold, diverse one from another. And the drinking was according to law, none being compelled to drink against their will; for the king Artaxerxes had commanded all the officers of his house to permit every man to drink according to his pleasure.*

We need not describe the royal banquet in detail. The pavilion in which Herodotus and the other envoys assembled was splendidly furnished with the richest hangings and couches, but appeared to be a mere temporary erection in the midst of the royal gardens for summer banquetings. The feast was served up in the Persian fashion, and seemed to last throughout the remainder of the day and night; there being very few dishes of cooked meats placed before the guests, but a constant succession of deserts of fruits and confectionaries. At night the palaces and gardens were lighted up with countless lamps, until the scene became infinitely more brilliant than in the golden daylight. Musicians and female dancers performed in every direction. Wine was poured forth in abundance. Flowers and perfumes

* Comp. Esther, i. 1—8.

were scattered around in careless profusion. Never, indeed, not even at Athens or at Memphis, had Herodotus seen such luxurious conviviality as he witnessed that night in the gardens of Persepolis.

Days and weeks passed away, but though Herodotus's gifts had been graciously received, and he had placed his credentials in the hands of the proper officer of the household, yet he had never been informed whether he was to be admitted to an audience with the Great King, or whether he was to confer with one of the royal councillors. At length he one day received a most signal token of the royal favour, namely, a Median vest, and the other articles of Median dress which formed the court costume of the Medo-Persian kings. The officer who brought them to the apartments set apart for the use of ambassadors, informed him that in seven days he would be admitted to an audience with the Persian majesty; and told him what bathings and perfumes it would be necessary for him to undergo during the interval, to prepare for his admittance into the august presence.

It was on a morning as bright as the birthday that Herodotus once again proceeded up the grand steps leading to the terraces of Persepolis. Again he passed through the lines of royal guards and groups of noble courtiers, conducted by a master of the ceremonies with a golden-headed staff. The scene was in one respect still more imposing than before, for this time he was to be ushered into the very presence of the Great King. On passing through the brazen gate he was not led through the portico of Xerxes, but towards the Hall of Hundred Columns, which was set apart as an audience hall for the reception of ambassadors. The entrances, as in the Hall of Xerxes, were guarded with winged bulls of colossal size. The walls were covered with emblematical sculptures and paintings representing the Great King in his character as

king of kings, lording it over the nations of the earth; and likewise in his character of representative and supreme worshipper of Ormuzd, combating with the impure creation of the bad genii of the dark and evil Ahriman.

Herodotus was led with solemn pomp through lines of guards and groups of nobles into the imperial presence. The stately magnificence would have subdued the boldest heart in the Athenian democracy. They who might have refused to bend the knee to the petty tyrant of a Greek city, would have thrown themselves at the feet of the representative of Ormuzd, and worshipped the Persian sovereign as a manifestation of the Persian deity. Upon a throne of massive gold, with a golden footstool at his feet, sat the Great King in his royal robes, the tallest and noblest man in the Persian empire. In his right hand was the golden sceptre with which he swayed a hundred nations; in his left was the sacred cup Havan, from which his sovereign hand had poured a thousand royal libations to the almighty Ormuzd. His tiara and dress were covered with gold and jewels, and his flowing hair and long beard were gracefully arranged in a multitude of curls. On each side of the throne the bodyguards were ranged in regular rows, with burnished bows and daggers, and arrayed in splendid costumes. Behind the king was an attendant bearing the fan; and also the armour-bearer with the royal dagger and sheathed bow. Above the canopy which overhung the throne were the ancient emblems of the lion and unicorn. Immediately before the presence were the costly vessels containing the sacred fire and burning incense.

Herodotus having performed the necessary ceremonies of prostration, as he had been previously instructed, was directed by the king's messenger, by whom alone the king communicated his will, to approach the throne. Herodotus obeyed, respectfully keeping his hand before his mouth to prevent his breath from offending majesty

It would be wearisome, however, to relate the tedious conversation which ensued. The objects of the mission had been previously explained by the satrap of Lydia to the Persian cabinet. The transfer of the little sovereignty of Caria from the family of Artemisia to that of Lyxes had been urgently pressed. Lyxes and his son Herodotus had been spoken of in the most favourable terms by the Lydian satrap; and hopes were expressed that, under their administration, the influence of Persia might once again be felt on the coasts and isles of the Ægean. The present audience was thus one principally of ceremony. Artaxerxes, through the medium of his messenger and interpreter, made a few inquiries of Herodotus concerning his travels in Scythia, Egypt, and Hellas; to which our traveller, though much overawed, contrived to make suitable replies; though whether the answers reached the ears of the king in their original integrity is a matter which can never be ascertained. At last the audience was declared to be over, and Herodotus was graciously informed that the objects of his mission were accomplished; and that he would receive letters and instructions from Nehemiah, the king's cup-bearer, to carry back to Sardis and Halicarnassus.

Months passed away, and Herodotus was still residing at Persepolis. He began to know a great many Persians in the service of the king, and to understand the Persian manners and religion. The Persian people generally were exceedingly proud, but, at the same time, excessively polite and courteous in their manners, and great sticklers for etiquette. They were divided into ten tribes, which were distributed into three castes; but every family, and, indeed, every member of a family, seemed to have a separate and individual rank. If two gentlemen of equal rank saluted each other, they did so by kissing each other on the mouth. If one was a little inferior to the other, they kissed the cheek. If one was of a very

much lower degree, he prostrated himself at the feet of the other. The Persians, as a nation, preserved the same kind of etiquette in their intercourse with foreign peoples. Thus they considered themselves to be the most excellent of mankind, and that those nations were the worst who lived the farthest from them; and they therefore esteemed those people the most who lived the nearest to Persia, and contemned those the most who lived the farthest. Herodotus, however, found himself to be an exception to the general rule, for as he had been presented by the king with a Median dress of honour, he was of course honoured accordingly.

The Persians still preserved some of their ancient virtues. They regarded personal valour as the highest attribute of man, and considered the charge of cowardice to be the greatest affront that one man could inflict upon another. But though they held valour in such high esteem, yet, after the desperate struggle at Thermopylæ, the father of Artaxerxes ordered the head of the Spartan hero Leonidas to be exposed upon a pole. That, however, must be regarded as an exception to the general rule, and merely as an instance of the extent to which the Persian kings indulged in their inveterate hatred against the Spartans. On the other hand, the charge of cowardice could never be borne unresented. During the Persian retreat after the battle of Mycale, Prince Masistes, the son of Darius Hystaspis and brother of Xerxes, taunted the general Artayntes with having commanded the army in the most inefficient manner, and brought mischief upon the royal house. Artayntes bore these rebukes without resentment; but when at length the prince declared that he was more cowardly than a woman, he flew into a violent rage, and at once drew his sword upon Masistes. At this moment a Halicarnassian, who was serving in the Persian army, chanced to see what was going forward, and, springing forward, caught the

maddened general round the middle, and threw him upon the ground. Meantime the guards of Masistes came up to the assistance of their prince, and the matter seems to have blown over. The Halicarnassian, however, subsequently received the government of all Cilicia as a reward for his timely interference.

Next to valour, the Persians considered that the exhibition of the greatest number of children was the greatest proof of manliness; and the Great King sent presents every year to those Persians who had the largest families. Sons, until they were five years old, lived entirely with the women, and were never admitted into their father's presence; so that if they died early, their death might not occasion any grief to their father. From the fifth to the twentieth year they were only taught three things, —namely, to ride on horseback, to shoot the bow, and to speak the truth. Lying they considered to be the most disgraceful action in the world; and, next to that, they abhorred getting into debt, considering that debtors must inevitably become liars. No one, according to law, could be put to death for a single crime, but only if, after a judicial examination, it were found that his misdeeds were greater and more numerous than his services. Unjust judges were punished with the utmost severity. Cambyses ordered one to be not only executed, but flayed, and directed that his skin should be stretched over the judgment-seat where he had sat, as a warning to his successors. Sandoces, also, a judge, who had been found guilty of having taken a bribe, was condemned by Darius Hystaspis to be crucified. Whilst, however, he was actually hanging on the cross, the king Darius considered with himself, and found that the services which Sandoces had rendered to the royal family were greater than his offences, and therefore ordered him to be taken down. The murder of a father or of a mother was considered by the Persians to be impossible; and the murderers in these

apparent cases were always declared to be either of illegitimate or supposititious birth. But perhaps one of the best laws by which society was restrained was this, that all conversation upon unlawful things, or upon any species of crime, was strictly prohibited; and thus the imaginations of weak-minded persons were preserved from the injurious excitement but too frequently produced by the recital of atrocious acts of murder or impurity.

The Persians in the days of Artaxerxes had, however, very much deteriorated from those hardy soldiers who had fought the battles of Cyrus. In spite of their contempt for foreign nations, they were exceedingly ready to adopt foreign customs, and indulged in many of the voluptuous vices of the countries which they had themselves conquered. The great Cyrus had himself feared this result, and used his utmost endeavours to stem the tide. After the overthrow of the Medes, the victorious Persians had represented to him that their own territory was small and rugged, and suggested that they should remove to some one or other of those fertile regions which they had reduced by their arms. The Persian conqueror, however, warned them that, if they migrated to richer climes, they must henceforth cease to be the rulers, and must become the ruled; for that delicate men sprang from delicate countries, and that no lands could produce both luxurious fruits and valiant men.

The religion of the Persians was a strange mixture of the old Magian rites and superstitions, and the purer worship of Ormuzd, as taught by Zoroaster. They still rejected all images, temples, and altars, and sacrificed to the sun and moon, the earth, fire, water, and the winds, from the tops of the highest mountains; and they likewise still retained the ancient chaunts and ritual restored by Zoroaster. But they had learnt from the Assyrians and Babylonians to worship the Assyrian goddess Astarte or Aphrodite, whom they invoked by the name of Aphrodite.

Dead bodies, especially those of the Magian priests, were still denied burial until they had been torn by some bird or dog; and human sacrifices were not unfrequently offered to the powers of darkness which were under the dominion of the evil Ahriman. The Magian priests, however, frequently obeyed the injunctions of Zoroaster, in endeavouring to clear the earth from the unclean creation of Ahriman. They considered the dog as a sacred animal, and as an emblem of Ormuzd, according to the teachings of the Zendavesta; but they would kill serpents and other reptiles, together with ants and birds, with their own hands, and think that by so doing, they were performing a meritorious action. They never burnt dead bodies like the Greeks, because they considered fire to be a deity, the symbol of the primal fire or creative energy of the godhead, from which proceeded Ormuzd himself; but they covered a corpse with wax, and so buried it in the ground, or, as in the case of the kings, lowered it by machinery into an excavated tomb. They never permitted any one afflicted with leprosy or scrofula to reside in the towns, or mix in the society of others; and they maintained that persons so afflicted must be suffering the punishment for having committed some offence against the sun. White pigeons were also expelled from the country for a similar reason. Rivers were held in the very highest estimation, and no Persian would ever wash his hands in a running stream, or permit any one else to do so.

Herodotus was not permitted to visit the tombs at Persepolis, but he was enabled to make an excursion to Pasargada, and behold the tomb of the great Cyrus. This sepulchral monument was built on the spot where the forces of Cyrus had defeated those of Astyages the Mede. It had been erected in the royal park, and near it was a grove of all sorts of trees, and a grassy and well watered meadow. The tomb itself had a foundation of square stones, arranged in a quadrangular form. On this

basis was raised a stone edifice, roofed over, and having a doorway so narrow, that even a man of moderate height could not enter without some difficulty. Within this stone edifice was a golden sarcophagus, in which the body of Cyrus was deposited; and near the sarcophagus was a couch resting on golden feet, and covered with Babylonian carpets. Costly garments of Median and Babylonian manufacture, and of various colours, were laid upon the couch, together with chains and scimitars, and ear-rings of gold and precious stones.* Close by was a small dwelling built for the residence of those Magians to whom, since the time of Cambyses, the care of the monument had been committed, the sons succeeding to the fathers in the sacred charge. Every day the Great King allowed the priestly guardians a sheep and a measure of corn and wine, and every month he gave them a horse to be sacrificed to Cyrus. On the tomb was engraved in Persian characters an inscription to this effect:—"O man! I am Cyrus who gave the empire to the Persians, and was lord of all Asia: therefore grudge me not my sepulchre."*

At the time of Herodotus's visit, and for centuries after, Pasargada was greatly reverenced by the Persians, and associated with many of their religious rites and institutions. It was here that the Persian kings were consecrated by the Magians on their accession to the throne. Here they were invested with the robes of Cyrus, and partook of a consecrated banquet; and many other mysterious ceremonies were performed, which were considered necessary to the inauguration of a sovereign.

It is not difficult to reconcile this magnificent treatment of the dead with the Persian ideas of the existence of the soul after death. We have already seen, in another chapter, that the Egyptians embalmed the bodies of their dead, and preserved them in magnificent sepulchres in accord-

* Arrian, vi. 29.

ance with their belief in the immortality of the soul, in the dogma of metempsychosis, and in the return of the soul to the earth after a cycle of 3000 years. Now, according to the religion of Zoroaster, as developed in the Zendavesta, there would be at some future time a resurrection of the dead, which would be accompanied by a universal restoration of all things, the universal triumph of the kingdom of Ormuzd, or of light, and the destruction of the kingdom of Ahriman, or of darkness. As a natural consequence of this belief, the Persian worshippers of Zoroaster, as opposed to the heretical upholders of the false and corrupt Magia, carefully preserved the bodies of their dead, as being destined to rise from their graves in renewed glory. The state of the soul between death and the resurrection, was looked upon as a prolongation of the present life; and the grave of the monarch came to be regarded as a sort of residence, which it was the duty of the living to provide with all things which had been considered necessary or suitable to the departed sovereign during his earthly career. This idea naturally led to the Persian practice of decorating the royal sepulchres in a manner corresponding to the progress of luxury in the world without; and at the same time led to the erection of those magnificent and luxurious palaces of Persepolis and Pasargada, which have mouldered away with the ashes of their ancient kings.

CHAP. XLV.

SUSA AND JERUSALEM, B. C. 446—445.

HERODOTUS'S INTERVIEWS WITH NEHEMIAH. — STATE OF THE HEBREW NATION. — CARAVANS OF ZERUBBABEL AND EZRA. — CHARACTER OF NEHEMIAH. — CURIOSITY OF HERODOTUS CONCERNING THE HEBREW PEOPLE. — DISCOURSE OF NEHEMIAH. — HEBREW RELIGION AND HEBREW HISTORY. — STORY OF QUEEN ESTHER AND HAMAN THE AMALEKITE. — HERODOTUS ACCOMPANIES NEHEMIAH TO JERUSALEM. — LEBANON, HERMON, AND TABOR. — RIVER JORDAN. — CONDITION OF THE INHABITANTS OF JERUSALEM. — HERODOTUS PROCEEDS OVER JERUSALEM. — DESCRIPTION OF THE CITY. — THOUGHTS OF HERODOTUS. — MEDITATIONS OF NEHEMIAH ON THE DESOLATION OF JERUSALEM. — PROPHETICAL GLIMPSES OF THE FUTURE.

HERODOTUS had several interviews with Nehemiah, the cup-bearer of Artaxerxes, and through him was enabled to communicate with the royal advisers. Nehemiah was not a Persian, but a Hebrew of Palestine. About a hundred and fifty years before the present date, the Hebrew nation had been transplanted by King Nebuchadnezzar from the fertile vales of Judæa to the banks of the Euphrates, an event which is known to the Scripture reader as the Babylonian captivity. Seventy years afterwards, when the Babylonian empire, under Belshazzar, had been overthrown by the Medes and Persians, Cyrus the conqueror issued the edict permitting all the Hebrews to return to their own land. A caravan of Hebrews, under their prince Zerubbabel, and high-priest Joshua, immediately set off from Babylon to the city of Jerusalem. This edict was confirmed by Darius Hystaspis, and many other Hebrews followed in the steps of their brethren; but the progress of the restored nation was checked by the jealous

animosity of some Assyrian settlers, who, under the name of Samaritans, had occupied the fertile lands to the north of Jerusalem. Eighty years after the caravan of Zerubbabel had departed for Palestine, King Artaxerxes had again renewed the edict of Cyrus, and another caravan of Hebrews, consisting of six thousand persons, had left Babylon under the conduct of a celebrated priest named Ezra, and proceeded to Jerusalem. Artaxerxes likewise appointed Ezra to be the governor of Judæa, under the general superintendence of the Persian satrap of Syria; and he entrusted Ezra with special powers to appoint judges over his people, to rectify all abuses which might have crept into the Hebrew administration, to enforce the strict observance of the Hebrew laws, and to make a collection amongst those Hebrews who chose to remain in Babylon and Persia, for the rebuilding of the great temple of Jehovah which was at Jerusalem.

The ancestors of Nehemiah had been carried away in the Babylonian captivity, but Nehemiah had not accompanied his brethren to the land of his fathers. He had risen high in the favour of the Great King, and could not, therefore, return without the permission of his royal master. His heart, however, was ever at Jerusalem. He could say with the Hebrew psalmist, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning."

The haughty dignity of the cup-bearer had somewhat offended Herodotus at their first interview. Like most Greeks, our traveller had himself a great contempt for Hebrews and Syrians generally; but gradually Nehemiah threw off his coldness, and Herodotus began to take pleasure in the elevated thoughtfulness of his conversation and the peculiar sweetness of his character. The interest he felt for the individual was gradually extended to the entire nation. He could not understand why the great Cyrus and the mighty Darius should have troubled themselves about such an insignificant people as the Hebrews

of Palestine. He saw, too, that Artaxerxes regarded them with peculiar affection, and that other Hebrews besides Nehemiah filled some of the highest offices in the state. He heard that when the priest Ezra was raising the collection for the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem, Artaxerxes and the members of his council not only contributed most liberally to the cause, but ordered the managers of the royal revenue west of the river Euphrates to supply Ezra with as much silver, together with wheat, wine, and oil, as he should require for the temple services. At the same time every person connected with the Hebrew temple was exempted from the payment of toll at the gates and bridges; and thus the priests, Levites, singers, porters, and nethinim were placed on an equality with the Medes and Persians.

Nehemiah soon discovered the curiosity of the Greek stranger. He had taken great pleasure in asking Herodotus about his extensive travels, and in listening to his modest accounts and sensible observations. He had, therefore, no hesitation in acquainting our hero with the circumstances which had obtained for his nation such high consideration in the Persian court. "You must know, O Greek," he said, "that the faith of our nation is like that of none others. We worship neither the sun, nor the moon, nor the stars; neither images nor fire; neither on high places nor in dark groves. Our God is the Eternal God, the Maker of heaven and earth, the Ruler of all things that are therein. His name is Jehovah. He made man in his own image, and placed him in a paradise of delights. But the angel of darkness, the old Serpent, the evil spirit of the under world, tempted man to break the laws of Jehovah. Then man was expelled from Paradise, and sin and sorrow entered the world; but Jehovah declared that in future days One should be born of a woman who should triumph over death and the Serpent, and reconcile man to the Eternal Father.

" The influence of the Serpent spread over the families of the earth, and the deluge came and destroyed the corrupted race. Again the Serpent weaned man from the worship of Jehovah. The coming of a Redeemer had been promised by Jehovah. The Divine Godhead had propounded a scheme of redemption for the salvation of mankind. The sacrifices and worship had been ordained by which man should approach the Eternal God until the coming of the Messiah and Saviour. But the Serpent was bent upon wresting the spiritual dominion of man from the hands of Jehovah, and upon establishing himself as the god of this world. By his insidious temptations the imaginations of men's hearts became vain and evil. Professing themselves to be wise, they became foolish, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. They worshipped the three sons of Noah whom Jehovah had saved from the flood. They saw the sun at noonday, and they worshipped it. They saw the moon and stars shining in brightness, and they worshipped them. They worshipped fire and water, the earth and the sea. They offered sacrifices in dark groves, and burnt incense on the highest hills. They worshipped the images of mighty men of old, and even bowed themselves in profane adoration before their deadly destroyer. They worshipped the Serpent, and turned their backs upon Jehovah. They worshipped the god of Hades, and rejected the God of Heaven.

" Now the Lord God said unto our father Abraham, ' Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and IN THEE SHALL

ALL FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED.' And Abraham, whose heart was pure and faithful to Jehovah, removed from the idolatries of Chaldæa, and sojourned in the land of Palestine. And Jehovah promised that his seed should possess the land, and that from his seed should be born the Messiah, who should save and redeem the world. And Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob, and Jacob begat Joseph and his brethren; and we Hebrews are the descendants of Jacob. After a while, our fathers removed from Palestine, and sojourned in Egypt, but in course of years were reduced to servitude by the tyrannical Pharaohs. Jehovah, however, was still the guardian of his chosen people. He raised up the prophet Moses to be their deliverer and lawgiver. He went before them in a pillar of cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night, and led them out from the land of Egypt into the land promised to Abraham. He made for them a path through the Red Sea, and drowned Pharaoh and his captains in the returning waters. He gave them his laws amidst thunder and lightning from the rocky steep of Horeb. He fed them in the wilderness with manna from heaven, and refreshed them with water from the flinty rock. He placed the princes of Palestine beneath their feet, and established them in the promised land. He gave them judges and kings, priests and prophets. The empire of the Hebrews extended from the Red Sea to the river Euphrates, and might have rivalled those of the Assyrians and of the Medes. But the Hebrews turned away from the worship of their God. In the words of our sacred chronicles, the chief of the priests and the people transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen, and polluted the house of the Lord which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them continually by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place. But they mocked the messengers of God, and

despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, and there was no remedy. Therefore he brought upon them Nebuchadnezzar the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age. He gave them all into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, and all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king and of his princes. All these Nebuchadnezzar carried to Babylon. And the Chaldees burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof. And those who escaped from the sword were carried away to Babylon, where they were servants to Nebuchadnezzar and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia.*

" Such, O Greek, were the Hebrew people. Our God has been ever with us so long as we were faithful in our worship and obedient to his laws; but those who went after other gods he left to their own devices. His prophet Daniel rose high in the favour of Nebuchadnezzar and of Cyrus, and his wisdom was above all the wisdom of the Magians and the astrologers. He interpreted the dreams which the Chaldæans could not interpret. Even Cyrus himself said the Lord God of the Hebrews is the true God."

Thus did Nehemiah frequently discourse with Herodotus. The Greek traveller was for a time deeply interested. He asked a thousand questions concerning the Hebrew worship and the Hebrew books; and Nehemiah took great pleasure in describing the Mosaic laws and temple services, and in relating the miraculous events which belonged to the history of his people. The more Herodotus heard of

* 2 Chronicles, xxxvi, 14—20.

the Hebrews the more he desired to know; and he learnt numerous particulars from the Persians belonging to the court, which still further raised his opinion of Nehemiah and his countrymen. A recent event had likewise taken place at Susa which strikingly displayed the Divine interposition for the protection of the Hebrews, and also accounted for much of the regard which the Great King entertained for their nation. Though the story is probably well known to all our readers, we shall repeat it in our own words as a pleasing illustration of Persian manners.

In the third year of the reign of Artaxerxes, namely, in B. C. 462, the Great King gave a splendid feast to all his servants and nobles in the palace at Susa, and extended the festivities over a period of six months. At the expiration of that time he gave a seven days' feast to all the Persians at Susa, in the pavilions of the royal gardens; whilst his queen, Vashti, gave a similar feast, within the precincts of the harem, to the ladies of the royal household. On the seventh day of this banquet the heart of the Great King was merry with wine, and he ordered his seven chamberlains to proceed to the royal harem and bring the queen Vashti into his presence, arrayed in her crown and robes, in order that he might show her extraordinary beauty to his people and princes.

The seven chamberlains obeyed the royal order. The Persian ladies, it is true, always lived in the strictest seclusion, and none but the most degraded ever exhibited their unveiled faces to the public gaze; and, indeed, not a single female figure is to be found carved on the walls of Persepolis. The order, therefore, would have better suited the licence of a Babylonian carousal than the modest retirement of a Persian harem; but still the word of the king was law, and was obeyed by his chamberlains without a murmur.

The high-spirited queen, however, refused to be ex-

posed, like a dancing girl, to the eyes of her subjects. Her answer was quickly conveyed to the Great King. The sovereign of Persia was enraged at the opposition to his will. He summoned his princes and wise men to ask what should be done in such an emergency. They replied, that the example of Vashti in refusing to obey the commands of her royal consort would speedily be followed by all the ladies in the empire, and that the result would be terrible and disastrous in the extreme. They, therefore, urged the king to divorce himself from Vashti, and take another wife, and to issue a decree that every man should bear rule in his own house, and that all wives, both great and small, should give honour to their husbands.

The edict was quickly drawn up, and translated into all the languages spoken in the Persian empire; and the lines of couriers on every road were busily engaged in carrying copies of it to every satrapy. Artaxerxes put away his wife Vashti, and it was necessary that preparations should be made for providing him with a new consort. Accordingly the fairest virgins in the empire were assembled at Susa in order that the king might select a bride. Amongst these virgins was a beautiful Hebrew maiden named Esther, the cousin and adopted daughter of a Hebrew named Mordecai. The loveliness of Esther attracted the admiration of the great king. She obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the other fair candidates for the hand of the sovereign. The royal crown was placed upon her head, and she became queen instead of Vashti; and Artaxerxes gave a great feast in honour of the marriage, and remitted the tribute from the several satrapies, and gave gifts, according to the Persian custom.

Meantime Mordecai sat at the gates of the royal palace, for Esther by his direction had kept the name of her country and lineage a profound secret. In this humble position Mordecai discovered a conspiracy which had been

formed by two of the king's chamberlains for the assassination of Artaxerxes. Accordingly he found means to acquaint his cousin Esther with the plot, and she at once communicated the matter to her royal consort in the name of Mordecai. An inquiry was immediately set on foot, and the whole matter was brought to light. The two chamberlains were both hanged on a tree, and a report of the proceedings was drawn up by the royal scribes and written in the book of the Chronicles of the Persian Kings.

Not long after this event the Great King promoted to the post of royal favourite and boon companion an Arabian named Haman, who seems to have belonged to the nation of Agagites or Amalekites of Arabia Petræa. The Amalekites, as our readers will remember, had brought upon themselves the curse of Jehovah for their opposition to his chosen people, and for their vile and continuous idolatry; and Saul had incurred the loss of his kingdom and the severe reproaches of the prophet Samuel because in his expedition against the Amalekites he had saved their king Agag alive.* The Great King advanced Haman the Agagite above the heads of all the princes of the court, and commanded that all the guards and servants belonging to the household should bow their heads to the favourite whenever he passed. Mordecai, however, mindful of the Divine curse pronounced against the Amalekites, refused to bow in reverence unto Haman. The guards at the great steps ascending to the palace gates remonstrated with the Hebrew, but he made not the slightest reply. They next told Haman, and the Amalekite was enraged at receiving such an insult from a Hebrew. The ancient deadly hatred which had burned in the breast of the Bedouin Arab against the children of Israel excited the fury of Haman against Mordecai. He resolved on the destruction not only of Mordecai, but of every Hebrew

* 1 Sam. xv.

throughout the empire. He at once cast lots to decide upon a lucky month and a lucky day for the accomplishment of his purpose; and the lot fell upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, that is, of the month of Adar, corresponding to the latter end of our February.

Haman then obtained admittance into the presence of the Great King, and, with all the audacity of a favourite, addressed Artaxerxes as follows: "There is a certain people," he said, "scattered throughout the various satrapies of the empire, whose laws are different from those of any other nation; moreover, they refuse to obey the laws of the Great King, and therefore it is not for the king's profit that they should be suffered to live. If it please the king, let an edict be written and published for their destruction, and I will pay 10,000 talents of silver into the royal treasury."

The king gave an attentive ear to the suggestion of his favourite. He took the royal signet ring from his finger and presented it to Haman, saying, "Both the silver and the people are in thy hands to do with them as seemeth good unto thee." The scribes were immediately summoned, and wrote, at the dictation of Haman, to all the viceroys and satraps of every province and nation of the empire, commanding that on the thirteenth day of the month Adar they should destroy all the Hebrews in their dependency or satrapy, great and small, women and children, and that they should confiscate the property of every one of that doomed race, and take it for a prey. Each letter was written in the name of Artaxerxes, and sealed with his ring, and the posts went out, and Artaxerxes and his favourite Haman sat down to drink wine; but the city of Susa was in sore tribulation.

Mordecai was soon made acquainted with the cruel edict. He rent his clothes and arrayed himself in sackcloth, and cried with a loud and bitter cry through the splendid streets and gardens of Susa. In every province

to which the edict was carried the Jews were afflicted with the deepest mourning. They were utterly cast down. They fasted, wept, and wailed, and many arrayed themselves in sackcloth and ashes.

The maidens in waiting upon Queen Esther carried the news of the general grief to their royal mistress. Esther sent raiment to Mordecai in the place of his sackcloth, but he refused to receive it. She then sent Hatach her chamberlain to ask him the meaning of his grief. Mordecai informed Hatach of the edict which had been issued, and of the enormous sum of money which Haman had promised to pay into the royal treasury if the Hebrews were destroyed. He likewise gave Hatach a copy of the edict to show to Esther, and desired him to charge her to make an immediate supplication to the king on behalf of her people. Hatach fulfilled his mission, but was sent back to Mordecai with the following message: "Every member of the royal household," said Esther, "and every subject in the Medo-Persian empire must be aware that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall enter the inner court of the palace and approach the presence of the Great King, without being especially summoned, is at once condemned to suffer death, unless the Great King shall please to extend his golden sceptre and save the life of the intruder. Now I the queen have not been called into the presence of the great Artaxerxes for the space of thirty days." To this message Mordecai replied as follows: "Do not expect to escape in the palace more than the Jews in the provinces; for if thou holdest thy peace at this time, deliverance will arise from some other quarter, but thou and thy father's house shall be utterly destroyed."

This startling appeal aroused the patriot spirit of the youthful queen. The timid Hebrew lady, who had passed her whole life in the seclusion of an oriental harem, now acted worthy of her high lineage, her country, and her

God. She boldly resolved to penetrate the almost sacred presence of the Great King, and save her countrymen from the bloody revenge of the Amalekite, or perish in the attempt. "Go," she said, "and tell Mordecai to gather together all the Hebrews in Susa, and bid them all to fast for three days and three nights, and I and my maidens will fast likewise; and at the expiration of that time I will enter the presence of the Great King, and if I perish I perish."

Three days passed away, and then the beautiful heroine decked herself in her robes, and, leaving the royal harem, penetrated into the inner court of the apartments of the Great King. Since the time when Darius, the son of Hystaspis, had forced himself and his brother conspirators into the presence of Smerdis Magus, the interior court, and the private apartments of the sovereigns of Medo-Persia, had been guarded with the most jealous care. The Great King might look upon the approach of Esther as an act of high treason, as the work of some palace conspiracy against his life, — even the guards might slay her without appealing to their royal master; but the dauntless beauty thought of her kinsmen and her God, and passed proudly on. Artaxerxes saw from his royal throne, in his richly decorated retreat, the lovely form of his youthful queen in the garden-like court below. He at once perceived her peril, and she obtained favour in his sight; and he held out his golden sceptre until she had approached and touched the protecting symbol. He asked what was her request, and promised that it should be granted. She replied by gracefully entreating him to come, with his favourite Haman, to a banquet of wine which she had herself prepared. The king and Haman came to the banquet, and Artaxerxes again asked her what petition she wished to present; but again she deferred making her supplication, and invited the king and Haman to a banquet on the morrow.

The ferocious and bloodthirsty Amalekite left the palace that day with a glad and joyful heart. He not only stood high in the favour of the Great King, but also in the favour of the beautiful mistress of the king's affections. At the gate of the terrace he again passed by Mordecai; but the proud Hebrew refused to pay him reverence, and his joy was turned to indignation. He hurried home, and sent for his friends, and for Zeresh, his favourite wife. He boasted to them, like a Persian, of the glory of his riches, of the multitude of his children, and of the favours which he had received from Artaxerxes and Esther, "yet all this," he said, "availeth me nothing so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate." Then said all his friends and Zeresh his wife unto him, "Let a gallows be made fifty cubits high, and to-morrow entreat the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon, and then go thou merrily with the king unto the banquet." This cruel suggestion pleased the revengeful spirit of the Amalekite, and he ordered the gallows to be made.

That very night the king Artaxerxes could obtain no sleep; and he ordered his servants to bring the chronicles of his empire, and read them aloud. Accordingly they read the whole story of the two royal chamberlains who conspired against the king's life, and of Mordecai who discovered the plot and made it known. Artaxerxes then inquired what honour and dignity had been conferred on Mordecai in return for the service he had performed, but was told that nothing whatever had been done. The next morning Haman was on the terrace outside the palace, ready to request the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows. Artaxerxes ordered him to be admitted, and before he could speak, asked him what ought to be done to that man whom the king delighted to honour. Haman immediately supposed that he himself was the fortunate individual to whom his royal master referred. "For the man," he said, "whom the king delighteth to honour, let

the royal apparel be brought which the king is accustomed to wear, and the horse that the king rideth on, and the crown royal which is set upon his head; and let this apparel and horse be delivered to one of the noblest princes, and let the prince array the man in the royal garments, and place him on the royal steed, and then let him lead the man through the street of the city, whilst a herald proclaims before him, 'Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour.'"

Artaxerxes then said to the astonished Amalekite, "Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, who sits at the gate of the palace." Haman obeyed, and led his triumphant enemy through the streets of Susa. He then hastened to his house mourning, and told his friends and Zeresh his wife of all that had befallen him. Zeresh and the wise men of his house were thunderstruck, and said to him, "If Mordecai be of the seed of the Hebrews thou canst not prevail against him." Whilst they were thus speaking, the royal chamberlains came to bring Haman to the banquet of Esther. The king again asked his beautiful queen to prefer her request, and she saw that the time was come for her to offer up her supplication. "O king," she said, "if I have found favour in thy sight, and if it please the king, let my life be given me, and the lives of my people; for I and my people are sold to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish."

Artaxerxes was immediately aroused. "Who is the man," he exclaimed, "and where is he that has done this thing?" Esther replied, "Our adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman."

The Amalekite was seized with a deadly terror. The king arose in his wrath and went into the palace garden. Haman stood up and prayed to Esther for his life, prostrating himself upon the rich couch on which she was reclining. At that moment Artaxerxes returned to the

banquet. "What," he cried, "will he insult my queen before my face?" The royal chamberlains immediately bound the fallen favourite. One of them said, "Behold, Haman hath erected a gallows for Mordecai fifty feet high." "Then," cried the king, "hang Haman thereon." So Haman was hanged on the gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai.

The remainder of the story of Esther is more interesting in connexion with Hebrew history than as illustrating the manners of the Persians. The murderous edict was at once rescinded. Mordecai was promoted to the honourable post previously occupied by Haman, and went out from the presence of the king arrayed in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple. The city of Susa threw off her tribulation, and rejoiced and was glad. The house of Haman was destroyed. On the day set apart for the massacre of the Hebrews, and on the day following, full power was given to that people to avenge themselves upon all their enemies; and the two days were kept by the Hebrews in every succeeding year as a great festival in honour of the national deliverance. This festival was called the Feast of Purim or of Lots, in memory of the lots cast by Haman to secure a fortunate day for the accomplishment of his design; and even down to our own time the Jews of every synagogue, and of every clime, gather together every year on the fourteenth of the month Adar to read through the book of Esther and curse the name of Haman; after which they spend the remainder of the day in mirth and festivity.

But to return to Herodotus. The court returned to Susa, and our traveller began to prepare for his homeward journey to Halicarnassus. He announced his intention to Nehemiah, upon which, after some hesitation, the Hebrew cup-bearer mentioned that he himself was

about to proceed to the country of his fathers, and would gladly accompany Herodotus as far as their roads lay in the same direction. It seems that some men of Judah had recently arrived at Susa, and when Nehemiah asked them concerning Jerusalem and the state of those Hebrews who had returned from their captivity to the land of their fathers, he was told a sad and over-true story. The restored remnant were in great affliction and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem had been broken down, and her gates burned with fire. This melancholy news had deeply affected the pious patriot. He mourned and fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven for mercy and compassion upon the chosen race; and God had answered his prayer and selected him as an instrument for the restoration of Jerusalem and the strengthening of the struggling nation. Whilst serving wine to the Great King, the sadness of his countenance had been observed by Artaxerxes, and he was asked the cause of his sorrow. Nehemiah was sorely afraid that his answer would displease his royal master, to whom he owed so many favours and benefits, but still he determined to speak out. "Let the king," he said, "live for ever. Why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my father's sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?" The king asked what it was that he requested. Nehemiah then offered up an inward prayer to God, and replied as follows: "If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, I pray that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my father's sepulchres, that I may build it." The queen was sitting by the side of Artaxerxes, and the king accordingly promised to send Nehemiah to Jerusalem. Moreover, he graciously gave him letters to the satraps of the provinces westward of the River Euphrates to direct them to convey him safely to Judah; also a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the royal forests, to furnish him with such timber as

might be required for the rebuilding of the walls and gates of Jerusalem; and he likewise appointed a force of cavalry to escort Nehemiah to his distant destination.

We need scarcely say that Herodotus gladly accepted the invitation of Nehemiah, both on account of the promised escort, and also for the sake of the society of the wise and patriotic Hebrew. Neither need we describe the long and tedious journey from Susa along the royal road as far as the Euphrates, and then from the Euphrates to the city of Damascus. The country, however, between Damascus and Jerusalem was sacred ground in the eyes of Nehemiah. It was hallowed by the steps of the patriarchs and prophets of his race — the race chosen by God to be the especial conservators of Divine revelation. Never before had he gazed upon that holy land, and yet it seemed as if he were traversing the scenes of his childhood. They ascended the lofty succession of mountain terraces of that mighty Lebanon which in the language of Arab poetry bears winter upon its head, spring upon its shoulders, and autumn upon its bosom, while summer lies sleeping at its feet. Herodotus gazed upon the distant cities of Tyre and Sidon and the blue waters of the Mediterranean studded with Phœnician ships, whilst Nehemiah was recalling in his mind's eye the glories of the magnificent Solomon, the temple and palaces of gold and cedar. Passing the huge snow-capped mass of Mount Hermon, they proceeded along the eastern bank of the Jordan, over a region that had been traversed by Isaac and by Jacob. They saw the place where Joshua had defeated the mighty army of cavalry and iron chariots with which the Canaanite king Jabin had endeavoured to crush the forces of Israel. They caught a distant glimpse of that beautiful Mount Tabor which unites the glory of Lebanon with the excellency of Carmel, and stands apart, like the altar of a land which is itself the temple of God. They passed the field of many a famous contest between

the Hebrews of Palestine and the Syrians of Damascus, and crossed the River Jabbok not far from that mysterious spot where the patriarch Jacob had wrestled with the angel. Proceeding along the opposite bank to the country of the hated and hating Samaritans, they at last forded the Jordan opposite Gilgal and Jericho, and reached the illustrious city of Jerusalem, which in olden days had crowned the mountains like a diadem:—

"How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! how is she become as a widow! she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary!

"How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger, and cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel, and remembered not his footstool in the day of his anger!"*

Such had been the condition of Jerusalem during the terrible captivity of her sons; and though the caravans under Zerubbabel and Ezra had endeavoured to build up her desolation, and to restore the temple of Solomon, yet the unfortunate Hebrews were continually suffering from the predatory excursions of Edomite and Arab hordes on the one side, and from the fierce and hostile hatred of the jealous Samaritans on the other. The death of Ezra had been followed by an aggravation of these evils. The afflicted people had lost all heart. Their fortifications had been utterly demolished by Nebuchadnezzar, and the rude defences which had been thrown up since the return from captivity had been in their turn destroyed by the ferocious Samaritans and the robber tribes of the desert. The temple services were conducted in the most hasty manner. The daily sacrifices were frequently performed whilst the enemy was at the gates; and Herodotus, as a Gentile, being only admitted into the outer court of the sanctuary,

* Lamentations of Jeremiah, i. 1.; ii. 1.

saw but little in the Hebrew ritual to excite his interest. His mind had become more settled of later years in the religious belief of his fathers; and though Nehemiah's account of the machinations of the serpent, and the origin of the worship of heroes and of images, had at first awakened his curiosity, yet to his uninformed eye the temple and its services were not so imposing as the rituals of Egypt and of Greece, and he quietly dismissed from his thoughts the subject of the Hebrew faith.

But though Herodotus was not much attracted by the religion of the Hebrews, yet he diligently inquired into their history. Whilst Nehemiah seemed to be engaged in private, Herodotus, with the eager curiosity of a Greek, obtained the services of a guide, and wandered over the ruins of the ancient city. At first he had some difficulty in inducing a Hebrew to accompany him. The religious scruples of the Jews, and their contempt for Gentiles, prevented many from listening to his request. His gold was refused with contempt, and frequently dashed upon the ground. At last, however, one of the Nethinim, or hewers of wood and drawers of water to the priests and Levites, accepted his gold, and offered to take him over the city, on condition that he would make his peregrinations in the night-time. Herodotus assented; and having ostentatiously exhibited a sword of ominous brightness and a stout staff, he set out with his guide on the third night of his arrival, which fortunately was the night of full moon.

Jerusalem was built on three hills—Zion, Moriah, and Millo, or Acra,—and was surrounded by a valley, which was again encompassed by an amphitheatre of elevations. On the south was the large hill of Zion, on which, in times as old as the Heracleids and the siege of Troy, had been built the mighty stronghold of the Jebusites; that stronghold which had successfully held out against all the attacks of the Hebrews until the accession of David the

son of Jesse. The shepherd king took the fort of Zion, and erected for himself in its place a palace of cedar, and likewise built there the city which was called the city of David. North of Zion was the hill called Millo in the Hebrew, and Acra, or "citadel," in the Greek; and over this hill the city of David gradually extended under the name of Jerusalem, the space between the two mountains being filled up by Solomon, the son and successor of David. East of Zion and Millo was the flat-topped hill of Moriah, on which Abraham had prepared to offer up the mysterious sacrifice of his son Isaac, and on which Solomon had built his magnificent temple of gold and cedar. On the north and east of Jerusalem the brook Kidron flowed along, winding through the valley of Jehoshaphat; whilst on the south of Mount Zion was the dark and hateful valley of Hinnom, or Tophet.

The thoughts which passed through the mind of Herodotus were very different from those which would be excited in the heart of the modern traveller. He ascended the Mount of Olives, and gazed upon the widowed city; but his soul was not stirred by the remembrance of Calvary, his eye sought not the garden of Gethsemane. Still the sight of those half-peopled ruins in the calm moonlight was deeply affecting. A city which had been richer than Athens, — a city which had been the favoured ally of Tyre and Sidon, and whose ships had sailed to Ophir and to Tarshish, — a city which had been one of the proudest capitals of Western Asia; there she lay, trodden to the dust by the cavalry of Assyria, and the miserable abode of miserable captives.

Whilst Herodotus was thus lost in meditation, a horseman might have been seen slowly riding through the valley of Jehoshaphat. It was Nehemiah, mournfully exploring the sepulchres of his fathers. He had told no man what God had put into his heart to do at Jerusalem; but, taking a few men with him, he had gone out by night by

the gate of the valley, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken down, and the gates, which had been consumed by fire. Leaving his horse with an attendant, he went a little farther, and then in a solitary spot, away from the gaze of mortal man, he fell upon his knees to the God of Israel. His heart was wrung with sorrow, but he wrestled with his despair. The deeds of his fathers and the miracles of his God arose to his remembrance. He was kneeling upon sacred ground,— upon the sepulchres of men whose names had been the watchwords in fight and the themes in song. He remembered the glorious promises to the fathers and the prophets,— the Shiloh to whom should be the gathering of the people.

"Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion."*

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"†

"The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob." "And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vine-dressers. But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the Ministers of our God."‡

* Isaiah, lii. 1, 2. † Ibid. lii. 7. ‡ Ibid. lix. 20.; lxi. 4—6.

CHAP XLVI.

HALICARNASSUS, B.C. 445—444.

HERODOTUS RETURNS TO HALICARNASSUS. — PESTILENCE. — FEARS OF THE AVENGING NEMESIS. — SORROW AND AFFLICTION. — STATE OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS AT HALICARNASSUS. — HERODOTUS RETURNS TO POLITICAL LIFE. — WRITES TO THE PERSIAN SATRAP. — CHARACTER OF LYGDAMIS, THE TYRANT OF HALICARNASSUS. — HERODOTUS' INTERVIEW WITH HIM. — ANXIOUS THOUGHTS. — STRANGE RECOGNITION. — EFFECTS OF BRIBERY. — A REVOLUTION. — JEALOUSY OF FACTIONS. — ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION. — HERODOTUS LEAVES HALICARNASSUS FOR EVER.

WHILST Nehemiah was rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and carrying out those extensive reforms which are recorded in Holy Writ, Herodotus was proceeding to the Philistine port of Gaza, and there taking ship for Halicarnassus. At Gaza he heard news of strange import. A terrible pestilence had ravaged many of the cities of western Asia Minor, and, defying all the medicines of the physicians, had carried off thousands. Herodotus anxiously inquired if any captain in the port had recently left Halicarnassus, but was answered in the negative. Nothing indeed was known but that the ravages of the pestilence had been unprecedented, and that in many cities the leaders of factions had taken advantage of the public fears to overthrow their government, whilst numerous villages had fallen a prey to the attacks of powerful and daring banditti.

A thousand fears agitated the breast of Herodotus during his voyage from Gaza to Halicarnassus. He looked back with a strange sadness upon the uniform

happiness which he had hitherto experienced. He could not refrain from comparing his own good fortune with that which had attended Polycrates and Crœsus; and he feared that the same jealous divinity which had punished their pride might humble his own. He remembered with mysterious awe the momentous words which Artabanus had addressed to Xerxes when endeavouring to dissuade the Great King from attempting the invasion of Greece. "Dost thou not see that the Deity points his lightning against the tallest creatures, and suffers them not to wanton in their pride, whilst the smaller ones offend him not? Dost thou not see that he hurls his thunderbolts against the loftiest buildings and the tallest trees? Dost thou not see that he cuts down everything that rises too high or grows too great?"*

These heathen notions of a jealous and overruling Providence, puerile though they were, had always been deeply impressed upon the mind of Herodotus. To him they had often seemed to justify the ways of God to man; but now they grievously afflicted his spirit. He feared that the ever-retributive and ever-equalising Nemesis had drawn the avenging sword upon him and his family. For three years he had been absent from Halicarnassus without having heard a word to assure him of the well-being of his wife and father. He was returning with his mission accomplished, and eager to seize the hand of his father and embrace his beloved Phædra. But the pestilence followed him like an avenging Erinnys. It filled his thoughts by day and his dreams by night. At last the ship entered the harbour of Halicarnassus. A boat came alongside, and he leaped hastily in. The old sailor who rowed it was unable to answer any inquiries. In a few moments they reached the shore, and the anxious traveller was rushing through his native streets.

* Herod. vii. 10.

Alas, alas, for Herodotus! Sorrow and affliction were indeed awaiting him. The pestilence had carried all away; his wife Phædra, and his father Lyxes, had fallen victims. The strong man was bowed to the ground. His house was desolate, and grass was growing in the courts. He ran hither and thither, but could find no consolation. The living were all mourners like himself. He hurried to the palace; but the old queen Artemisia knew him not, but babbled on of Xerxes and of Salamis. He went to the house of a physician whom his father had known; but the physician had died. He inquired for his slaves; but they and his wealth were in the hands of the executors of his father, and he cared not to go after them. An old friend saw him and pitied him, and took him to his house, and gave him bread and wine; but he could neither eat nor drink. He heard strange news of the young king Lygdamis and the war of faction; but the words fell on heedless ears. Night came on, but he knew it not. He threw himself on a couch, but only to grow more feverish and more mad. Dead! all dead! and he was alone in the world.

He mastered himself, and became calm. He could not sleep, but he regained his reason. He moved about like a shade from the under world. He listened with unnatural silence whilst he was told the heartrending story of pestilence and death. He visited the magnificent tombs which had been erected over the remains of all that he held most dear. The property left by his father was placed in his hands. His house was prepared for his reception, and his slaves returned to their duties. Then he removed to his abode, and Nature had her way. He fell into an agony of tears.

Sorrow for the dead purifies the soul; it carries the imagination into the spiritual world; it bears the heart to the throne of the Almighty. Man in his pride may gaze on death with cold and icy stare. In his thoughts he may

reproach the Deity who bore away his treasure. With his tongue he may curse the physician who could not avert the stroke. But if the tears fall his pride vanishes, his heart softens, his words are, "Thy will be done." Sorrow for death and sorrow for sin are the only sorrows that bear the soul from earth, and lead it to the very gates of heaven.

Herodotus arose from his couch an altered man. The world had few charms for him; but the serious business of life soon demanded his attention. His father had left a will duly signed, sealed, and attested. The whole of the property was equally divided between Herodotus and another and much older son, named Theodorus, whom we have had no occasion to mention in our previous chapters, as hitherto he had lived in another city; and notwithstanding the profuse expenditure of Lyxes in the furtherance of his political designs, the lands, slaves, and money, which he had left, were much larger than Herodotus had ever expected. Though this circumstance could afford our traveller but little consolation for his losses, yet it served to employ his thoughts. The aspect of political affairs was likewise very alarming, and his father's station, his own recent mission to Susa, and his close relationship to Artemisia and Lygdamis, obliged him to leave his solitude, and take an active part in the coming crisis.

The dowager queen Artemisia was on the verge of the grave, and totally incapable of taking any share in the government. The youthful king Lygdamis having been released by death from the control of his guardian Lyxes, had taken the young aristocrats of Halicarnassus into his councils, and commenced a tyranny of unexampled vigour, but of unbearable oppression. He possessed the spirit of the old queen Artemisia without her discretion. He had taken a body of foreign mercenaries into his pay, and seemed to exercise the policy of Rehoboam in his treatment of the citizens of Halicarnassus. "My father made

your yoke heavy, but I will add to it; he chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." The people had been bowed down by the terrible and mysterious pestilence which for many months had yielded neither to medicines, nor to sacrifices, nor to purifying rites. The pestilence, however, had now passed away. The democratic citizens began to recover their spirit; and the aristocratic party discovered that they had suffered a severe blow in the death of Lyxes.

The return of Herodotus revived the hopes of both parties. Every one in Halicarnassus knew that Herodotus had been sent on a mission to Susa; but the objects of that mission had been kept a profound secret by Lyxes. Whilst, therefore, the democrats were anxiously waiting for the return of Herodotus to the bema of the public assemblies, Lygdamis and his party were using every effort to allure him to their side. Herodotus himself was not indisposed to forget a portion of his grief by devoting himself to the welfare of his countrymen. But he felt that hitherto he had suffered himself to be too much led and guided by his ambitious father, whose schemes, however grand, were less calculated to increase the happiness of others than to aggrandise himself. He, accordingly, determined to devote many days to the calm consideration of the subject in the solitude of his own chamber before plunging into the factious strife, which was fast verging to an open war of parties.

On the death of Lyxes all his writings had been placed under seals by his executors; and in this state had been delivered into the hands of his son. Herodotus now read and examined them with the utmost care, and then consigned to the flames all those which bore any reference to the state of Halicarnassus. This, indeed, was of the utmost consequence; for as the foundation of all the schemes of Lyxes had been the transfer of the sovereignty

of Halicarnassus to himself and family, a discovery would have been most injurious to his memory, to say nothing of the dangers which it would have entailed upon his son. The study of these writings still more impressed our traveller with the extraordinary designs which had been projected by his father — designs which had been the labour of a life, and which were just on the eve of execution when death had frustrated them for ever. But Herodotus by no means inherited the ambition of Lyxes; and his recent bereavements had still more stifled his desires for fame or greatness. He simply aspired to be useful to his generation and win the favour of the gods; and having resolved upon the course to pursue, he proceeded at once to action. He, however, left untouched an immense store of arms which Lyxes had secreted in a cellar under his house, and which Herodotus thought might perhaps be useful at a future day, and certainly could not be disposed of without difficulty and danger.

The first thing was to communicate with the Persian satrap of Lydia. Accordingly he wrote an epistle, in which he detailed all that had taken place, and declined the honours which had been intended for himself; and likewise expressed his intention of living for the future the retired life of a simple citizen of Halicarnassus. He next carefully considered the claims and complaints of the democracy, and proceeded to confer with the young king his brother-in-law; not without regretting that he should have hitherto held so very little intercourse with the brother of the lost Phædra.

Lygdamis was barely twenty-one. His mind and body had been naturally weak from his birth; but his powers had been still farther depraved by the systematic policy of Lyxes and Artemisia. The young prince had been taught to ape the manners, the follies, and the vices of a Persian satrap. He had been suffered to drink wine to excess, and to indulge in low debaucheries with idle and

dissipated companions, whilst Lyxes had in reality been the real sovereign of the state. His temper was ungovernable, and he often gave way to paroxysms of the wildest rage. At the same time he had not unfrequently displayed considerable energy and ambition. His enfeebled constitution prevented his distinguishing himself in the chase or gymnasium; but he spent the hours not devoted to dissipation in forming his wild companions into a mimic corps, of which he himself took the command, and which was totally irrespective of the customary military exercises and training of the Halicarnassian ephebi.*

Lyxes had laughed at this brotherhood of warriors, and considered that playing at soldiers answered as well as any other amusement in keeping the young prince from the council chamber, and preventing his interference with the real government of the state.

After the death of Lyxes the proceedings of Lygdamis took all Halicarnassus by surprise. A body of foreign troops held the acropolis, and the most distinguished leaders of the democracy were suddenly arrested and thrown into chains. The citizens crowded to the prytaneum and agora, but a herald proclaimed that all who did not at once return to their houses would be regarded as enemies of the state, and treated accordingly. The spirit of the democracy was at that time subdued by the fearful pestilence, and the terrified people obeyed the injunctions of the herald.

The ostensible object of Herodotus's visit to Lygdamis was to obtain the liberation of the democratic leaders who had been thrown into prison. His real object, however, was to commence an acquaintance with the young king, and study his character, with a view to obtain such concessions as he saw were absolutely necessary for the

* See Chapter II.

stability of the government. Lygdamis received him with a wild and restless air, which at first gave Herodotus the idea that he was intoxicated; but on eyeing him with a steady glance, the suspicion flashed across our traveller that his brother-in-law was labouring under some divine wrath, in short, that he was insane. After a mutual exchange of compliments, Lygdamis grew more and more excited, and then burst out into an expression of rage against the deceased Lyxes, and, as if anticipating the object of Herodotus's visit, announced his intention of ordering his political prisoners to be executed that very night. Herodotus felt that his own life was in immediate jeopardy, but the presence of mind which he had acquired in many a strange adventure did not fail him in the present moment. He congratulated Lygdamis on his accession to the uncontrolled sovereignty, passed a few compliments on the fine appearance of the royal guards, and expressed his approval of the execution of the democrats, but suggested that perhaps it might have a better effect upon the citizens if carried out in open day, in the very midst of the agora. The bait took. Lygdamis expressed a violent friendship for Herodotus, and invited him to a banquet of wine which he was going to give on the morrow in the Persian fashion; and in order to avert all suspicion and calm the prince's mind as much as possible, Herodotus accepted the invitation.

But small time now remained for action, and Herodotus returned to his house full of a thousand anxious considerations. The state of affairs was indeed most alarming. A revolution headed by the democracy might be productive of the most horrible anarchy, and yet without a revolution the city would continue at the mercy of a tyrant and a madman. The aristocratic party had been weakened by the oppression of the king and the opposition of the democracy. Even supposing that a popular revolution could be carried out, two questions at once arose;

first, into whose hands was the government to be transferred? and secondly, what power was to be brought into existence to act as a restraint upon a successful and infuriated populace? The two great parties of aristocrats and democrats were each divided into numerous families and cliques, and the success of one party over the other was not unlikely to lead to a contest for supremacy amongst the cliques of which the victorious party was composed. The aristocracy was not sufficiently strong to seize or to retain the supreme power, whilst the democracy was too much unprepared for command to be trusted with the sovereignty. These were a few of the anxious and hurried thoughts which oppressed Herodotus as he left the place; but upon one thing he had come to a definite conclusion, namely, that a revolution must be attempted at all hazards.

Whilst passing along the street, Herodotus glanced at the troop of foreign mercenaries drawn up in rank and file, when his eye was suddenly caught by the countenance of the commanding officer. The face of the man was perfectly familiar to Herodotus, and the recognition was apparently mutual, but yet nothing could be more unsatisfactory. The man regarded our traveller with a threatening look betokening the deadliest hatred, and yet he was a Greek from European Hellas. At the same time Herodotus was of course anxious to open a communication with him, but could not at all remember in what place and under what circumstances they had previously come in contact. At last he determined to have recourse to his universal charm, a piece of gold, and carelessly held two or three gold darics in his hand purposely to catch the eye of the officer. The sight of the darics, however, appeared to have a contrary effect to what he had expected. The officer seemed to be in a greater rage than ever. Suddenly the truth flashed upon Herodotus. "I have you now," he said to

himself; "you are Eupolis, the rascally money-changer from Athens."

This discovery was most fortuitous. Herodotus hurried home with all speed, and wrapped up five darics and sent it by a slave with a verbal message to Eupolis, that having known him at Athens, he should be glad to see him at the midday meal. The slave returned with the answer that the officer would come immediately. Thus one important step was taken in the projected revolution without the necessity of confiding the scheme to a single citizen.

Eupolis yielded without a struggle to the all-powerful influence of gold. He showed himself, during a short conference with Herodotus, to be perfectly aware of the tottering state of the little Halicarnassian sovereignty, and was not only ready but eager to prove a traitor to Lygdamis; whilst the same love of money which had led to his banishment from Athens, was sufficient to enable him to swallow his rage against Herodotus, and undertake to place all the mercenaries under his command at the disposal of our traveller. Herodotus, however, was by no means inclined to place much confidence in such a treacherous coward. He only desired the release of the imprisoned democrats, and the removal of the band of mercenaries from the dangerous authority of Lygdamis. He knew that the revolution must follow, but he decided that he must leave its guidance to the gods. He felt that no mortal could say whether the citizens were or were not as well prepared as those of Athens had been for the exercise of the sovereign power; and he considered that if the revolution terminated in anarchy and bloodshed, he himself might interfere at the head of the mercenaries whom he had purchased, and endeavour to effect in person the restoration of order and of law. Accordingly he gave Eupolis a large sum of money in hand as an earnest of what he might expect. He promised to give him a still

larger sum on the following morning, if he could that night effect the liberation of the prisoners. Thirdly, he promised a still greater amount of treasure, and double pay, on condition that in case of a popular rising, Eupolis should obey all his orders, and his only.

Herodotus then dismissed Eupolis, and began to determine more fully upon his own line of action. He had fortunately succeeded in getting the foreign mercenaries into his power, and that without exciting the suspicions of a single citizen. He felt, however, that Eupolis was not to be trusted for more than a few days, and perhaps not for a few hours. Still he was extremely reluctant to take any one into his counsels. He considered that the release of the prisoners must bring on a crisis, and the remainder he left to the gods.

That night the leaders of the democracy were released. Eupolis had won over the gaolers by threats and promises, and obtained admittance to their cells. He had then alarmed the captives with the intelligence that they were to be executed at sunrise; encouraged them with the assurance that a revolution was on the point of breaking out; and engaged to liberate them immediately upon the receipt of a certain sum of money for each. The prisoners saw their danger. Every moment was precious. Two of the richest swore by the most solemn oaths that they would pay the ransom for the whole, if liberty was granted them. Eupolis had the boldness to convey them to their homes, and receive the money; and then returned to the prison and gave the others their liberty. He told them all to communicate at once with Herodotus, the son of Lyxes, who he said had recently returned to Halicarnassus, and was the leader of the revolutionary party. He proceeded himself to the house of Herodotus, and announced the deliverance of the captives, just at the moment that a secret message from the liberated prisoners was delivered to Herodotus by a trusty slave. He then

claimed his reward, and Herodotus paid it him. He next declared that his mercenaries were not content with the money that he had distributed amongst them, and were clamouring for more gold. Herodotus felt that the crisis had arrived, and gave him a still further supply. The next morning at sunrise Eupolis set sail in a vessel bound for Rhodes, with all the money intended for himself and his mercenaries; and never from that hour did Herodotus ever again set eyes on the traitor.

The next morning all Halicarnassus was in an uproar. Lygdamis discovered that his prisoners had escaped, and that Eupolis had fled no one knew whither. The mercenaries found themselves without a commander. A revolutionary conspiracy had been organised by the liberated democrats, and Herodotus had assured its leaders that he had won over Eupolis and his mercenaries by abundant bribes; but now both he and all the members of the conspiracy were astounded by the news that the double traitor had left them in the lurch. The revolutionary leaders held another anxious meeting before openly declaring themselves in the agora, or resolving on flight, but in the very midst of their deliberations the instinct of the masses enabled them to redress their own wrongs. It was one of those convulsive throes by which nature sometimes seeks to relieve herself from social or physical disease, or to punish those who violate her sacred laws. The tidings had spread through Halicarnassus that the chiefs of the democracy were freed from their chains, and that Eupolis, the chief instrument of the tyranny of Lygdamis, had turned traitor to his master. It was soon whispered that the foreign troops were all in confusion. Herodotus, fretting at the conduct of Eupolis, was returning to his house, when a large crowd of citizens poured into the agora, crying—"Down with the tyrant Lygdamis." The appearance of Herodotus was received with loud cheering. The people shouted to him to lead them to the acropolis.

Herodotus yielded to the influence of the moment, and placed himself at their head. He led them back towards his own house, and whilst they were crying out that he was betraying them, he opened the secret arsenal of his father, and supplied the multitude with swords and javelins. The excitement increased every moment as Herodotus at the head of his brave mob marched on to the acropolis. The mercenaries fled; the gates were opened by friends within; and a few short hours saw Lygdamis sent into exile, and the sovereign power in the hands of the citizens of Halicarnassus.

The exigencies of the case demanded that a provisional government should be immediately established. The feeling of the masses was in favour of a constitution resembling that of Athens, and Herodotus, who was at that moment all-powerful with the multitude, suggested that the government should be delegated to a provisional council of nobles and chief citizens, until an embassy could be sent to Athens to request the assistance of Athenian commissioners in establishing a constitution on a democratic basis. This prudent suggestion was set aside by the jealousy of the democratic leaders. The multitude adjourned from the acropolis to the place of public assembly, but there the war of words gradually became louder and more furious, and Herodotus could plainly see that the angry passions of the speakers would soon lead them to have recourse to blows. There was no one there to represent the aristocratic party unless he himself chose to do so, and that he saw was hopeless. Meantime sense and reason were sacrificed to the madness of party-spirit. The leaders of the democratic factions were jealous to the last degree of the sudden popularity which Herodotus had attained. They brought forward the most infamous charges and indulged in the vilest invective. He ascended the bema and endeavoured to allay the storm by conciliatory language, but found that he had already lost his influence,

and that his voice was drowned in clamorous disapprovals.

Herodotus returned to his lonely house weary and sick at heart. His first experience of active political life had disgusted him with it for ever. He had almost forgotten his griefs, but now they once again rose to his remembrance, and filled him with fresh sorrow. Halicarnassus had become more than ever hateful to him, and he determined to leave it, perhaps never to return. He thought of Athens and Phylarchus, of pleasant voyages across the Ægean, of the strange life he had led in mysterious Egypt and savage Scythia, and of the palaces and gardens of Babylon and Persepolis. In this mood he retired to rest, and, notwithstanding the excitement of the day, soon fell into a heavy slumber.

In the midst of pleasant dreams he was suddenly awoke by the noise of a scuffle, and the cry of his slaves. By the light of a small oil-lamp which stood in his chamber, he saw that his slaves had arrested an assassin and disarmed him. The assassin was stretched on the ground, and Herodotus immediately recognised one of his most violent supporters of the previous morning. "Whence come you?" asked Herodotus. "I come," said the man, "from the secret council of the avengers of the people."

Herodotus was now alarmed. He feared no open enemy, but he shuddered as he thought of his narrow escape from the midnight assassin. He sent one of his trustiest slaves to inquire what vessels were in the harbour. He wrote a letter to his brother Theodorus, informing him that he intended leaving Halicarnassus for some years, and requesting him to accept his lands and slaves; but to liberate every slave who should attain the age of forty-five years, and to give a certain sum for his maintenance. He packed up all his gold and jewels, and prepared for an immediate voyage. At length the slave returned from the harbour with the information that a

vessel would sail to Athens at sunrise, and that the captain's name was Phylarchus! Two hours only intervened, but by that time Herodotus and his treasures were on board the good ship Castor and Pollux, and he was once again grasping the hand of his old friend, and bound for the favourite city of bright-eyed Athena.

CHAP. XLVII.

THURIUM, B. C. 443—427.

HERODOTUS'S RETIREMENT AT THURIUM. — HIS MEDITATIONS UPON THE PAST. — ENVY OF THE GODS. — COMPILES HIS GREAT HISTORY OF THE PERSIAN WAR. — EPIC CHARACTER OF THE HISTORY. — SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE HISTORY. — HERODOTUS THE HOMER OF HISTORY. — A SECOND MARRIAGE.

THUS it was that Herodotus went from Halicarnassus to Athens, and from Athens to Thurium. On reaching the great city of Athena, he heard that a band of emigrants had assembled from all parts of Hellas, and was about to sail for Italy under the auspices of Athens; and accordingly he immediately decided upon accompanying the colonists as a volunteer. But we have already told the story of the establishment of this colony in an opening chapter; and we have nothing further to do than to take up the thread of our narrative as we there left it, and proceed towards the conclusion of our biography.

Herodotus was forty-one years of age when the settlers landed at Thurium. Henceforth his life was an almost uninterrupted calm. The ambition of his early years had passed away. He purchased a sufficient number of slaves, and cultivated his allotment of land with such ardour, that his farm was soon considered to be the best in the colony. Politics he avoided as he would a pestilence. The dissensions which disturbed the new settlers could not draw him from the retirement of his farm. He lamented the angry passions which were called into play, first by the struggles for supremacy between the Sybarites and the colonists, and subsequently by the party-spirit

which prevailed amongst the colonists themselves, between the Thurians from Sparta and the Thurians from Athens. But he gave his sympathies to neither side. He never interfered excepting for the purpose of advocating the reference of all points in dispute to the arbitration of the gods; and he always showed himself to be the readiest subscriber to every embassy which was despatched to the mother country to consult the sacred oracles.

In this calm seclusion the mind of Herodotus dwelt with more satisfaction upon the experiences of the past, than upon the few events which chequered his Thurian life. He revelled in the glorious stand made by the Greece of his early youth against the overwhelming armaments of Asia; and he would have gladly shut his eyes to that terrible Peloponnesian war which, after the year B.C. 431, convulsed every state in Hellas, and filled almost every city with treachery and bloodshed. He loved to muse upon the strange and distant countries which he had visited in early manhood, and cared not to listen to the story of those horrible massacres which were taking place at Corcyra and Platæa. On the other hand, the loss of his beloved wife had cast a melancholy shade upon his religious belief. Whilst the sunny memories of youth gladdened his advancing years, the great grief of his life threw a black shadow over his conceptions of the gods. He became more than ever convinced of the truth of that fallacious idea to which we have already frequently alluded, that the gods envied, rather than promoted, the advancement of the human race; and that the avenging Nemesis not only rebuked the pride and vainglory of presumptuous mortals, but likewise envied the happiness of the most virtuous citizens, and visited the best of men with the severest of afflictions.

This childish idea of the envy of the gods had found admittance into many of the religious mysteries, and for some time had operated most unfavourably upon the joyousness of the Greek national worship. But upon Hero-

dotus it exercised a very peculiar influence. It warped alike his judgment and his actions. To him it appeared to be the one great principle by which an overruling Providence governed the universe, and which was exhibited in the history of every nation, and the life of every individual; and thus in all his sayings and doings he carefully avoided all pride and presumption, and studiously took every occasion to consult the oracles that he might never inadvertently act in opposition to the divine will.

The great event, however, of this period of Herodotus' life, was his compilation of the history of the war between the Greeks and Persians in the reigns of Darius and Xerxes. This glorious war had not only been his favourite study from his early boyhood, but it was also a striking illustration of his prevailing belief. An overruling Providence had ordained that the presumptuous pride of Persia should be humbled in the dust by the insignificant forces of Hellas. Whilst, therefore, Herodotus had been unconsciously engaged from his youth upwards in collecting materials for this important task, the subject itself was in perfect harmony with the tone of his mind; and the rich experiences of his manhood enabled him to illustrate every fact which he was called upon to narrate.

In a previous chapter we glanced at the literary character of those prose writers who preceded Herodotus, and we there reminded the reader that their works consisted partly of genealogical lists, partly of records of the foundations of states by wandering races and heroes, and partly of collections of early legends, and of whatever appeared historical in ancient songs. These historical materials were necessarily scanty and uncertain in a country like Hellas, inhabited by a variety of races, and separated into a number of independent states, and where the collective peoples never had, like the Egyptians or the Hebrews, a central point of union. Moreover, we may safely say that prior to the peace which intervened

between the Persian and the Peloponnesian wars, few educated Greek travellers had possessed like Herodotus the opportunities of wandering from city to city for the collection of facts, and from temple to temple for the collection of ancient legends. Herodotus was, therefore, the first Greek writer who treated history as an artist. He had in his early years, as we have already hinted, grounded himself in the collected legends, the histories of cities, and the genealogies of preceding historians; and had then been enabled to sojourn in distant lands, where he could see with his own eyes the nature of the different climates of the earth, and the manners, religion, and history of the peoples of the ancient world.

The history written by Herodotus at Thurium is to be regarded as a grand epic, based upon two leading ideas, the one historical and the other religious, but both thoroughly harmonising with each other. The history was intended to be the history of the wars between the Greeks and the Persians, between Europe and Asia; but in the progress of this work he was perpetually led to trace the cause of each event, to insert histories of different kingdoms, to introduce the records of families and races, to represent the manners and religion of nations, and to describe the geography and productions of countries, as each one appeared on the great arena. His work, thus crowded with episodes and digressions, partakes more of the character of an encyclopædia, though the narrative flows on in an agreeable and uninterrupted stream from the very commencement. The pervading religious idea which gives a uniform tone to the entire history, and invests it still more decidedly with the epic character, is the idea of a fixed destiny, of a wise arrangement of the world, which has prescribed to every man his path, and which allots ruin and destruction not only to crime and violence, but also to excessive power and riches and overweening pride. This idea is "the envy of the gods," as

Herodotus called it, but which was personified by the Greeks of his time into the divine Nemesis. To this divine power he constantly adverts in every portion of his history. He shows how the Deity visits the sins of the ancestors upon the descendants; how the human mind is blinded by arrogance and recklessness; how man will frequently rush wilfully upon his own destruction; and how oracles, dreams, and omens, which ought to be warning voices against violence and insolence, mislead from their ambiguity if interpreted by blind passion. We will now endeavour to convey to the reader some slight notion of the scope of this extraordinary work, which has obtained for our traveller the name of the Father of History. The history has been divided into nine books, according to the names of the nine Muses, and we cannot do better than follow this arrangement in a brief abstract.

In Book I., Herodotus traces the enmity between Europe and Asia to the mythical times, and retails the old stories which accounted for the first hostilities. The Argive maiden Io was said to have been carried off from Argos by the Phœnicians some century or so before the time of Moses. The Greeks retaliated on Asia by carrying off Europa from Tyre, and Medea from Colchis. Then Paris came from Troy and carried off Helen from Sparta. Hence arose the Trojan war on the shores of Asia Minor. Herodotus, however, soon dismisses these legends. Crœsus, king of Lydia, he says, was the first Asiatic who really attacked the Greeks. Fifty years only before the battle of Marathon he subdued the Æolian, Ionian, and Dorian settlers on the western coast of Asia Minor.

This statement would have at once brought his readers down to the historical times; but Herodotus seizes the opportunity for flying off into a digression concerning the history of the great kingdom of Lydia from the earliest period to the reign of the rich and powerful Crœsus. This king determined on a war with Persia, and accordingly

consulted the most celebrated oracles in the ancient world, and contemplated forming an alliance with Athens and Sparta. This latter event entails another digression upon the previous history of Athens and Lacedæmon. This being concluded, Herodotus returns to the Lydian history. He describes the war between Cyrus the Persian, and Crœsus the Lydian. The latter is punished by the divine Nemesis for his pride and vain glory. Sardis is taken by Cyrus, and the Lydian possessions are henceforth included in the great Persian empire.

Herodotus now reverts to the history of Cyrus, and in doing so finds it necessary to ascend to a very remote period. He tells us, that in ancient times the great Assyrian empire was the dominant power in Persia. Then the Medes revolted, and established an independent kingdom, and Herodotus of course relates their history. The Medes united with the Babylonians and overthrew Assyria. Asia became thus divided between two empires, the Median and the Babylonian. The Median empire included Persia, but Persia revolted under the great Cyrus, and in her turn conquered the Medes. Cyrus subjected the Lydians, as we have already seen, and subdued the Greeks on the shores of Asia Minor, and Herodotus seizes the opportunity of describing the delightful colonies of Ionia, Æolis, and Doris. Cyrus also marched against Babylon, and Herodotus tells us of her lofty towers, her stupendous walls, her gorgeous temples, and her brazen gates. Cyrus last of all crossed the Oxus, and attacked the Massagetæ of the Khirgis Steppe, but was defeated and slain, B. C. 530.

Book II. commences with the accession of Cambyses, son of Cyrus, to the throne of Persia. Cambyses projected the conquest of Egypt, and from this point Herodotus digresses into a complete history of Egypt and the Egyptians, which occupies the entire book. Egypt to him was indeed a land of marvels, a land excelling all

others in mighty works; but we have already developed his acquaintance with that mysterious country.

In Book III. the main thread of the history is once more resumed. Herodotus narrates the reign of Cambyses, and relates the particulars connected with his conquest of Egypt. The unsuccessful expeditions against the black Ethiopians of the burning zone, and the people of the oasis of Siwah, who possessed the celebrated oracle of Zeus Ammon, are also described with sufficient fulness; and a strange account of the table of the sun and crystal sepulchre is likewise included. Next broke out the revolt of the Magians, which was followed by the death of Cambyses and accession of the false Smerdis to the throne of Persia. Smerdis was slain in the conspiracy formed by the seven noble Persians, and Darius Hystaspis succeeded to the empire. Darius divided the whole Persian empire into twenty satrapies, and this circumstance gave Herodotus the opportunity of surveying the whole Persian empire, with all its provinces and revenues; and in this survey he includes remarks on the earth's extremities, and describes the rumoured productions of India, Arabia, Ethiopia, and distant regions of the Ural and Altai mountains. The main history in this book concludes with an account of the revolt and re-capture of Babylon; but the book itself contains two important digressions concerning Greece, which are connected with the personal history of Darius Hystaspis. Whilst Cambyses was in Egypt Darius Hystaspis was merely an officer in his service, having no hope whatever of ascending the throne of Persia. In this comparatively humble position he was presented with a scarlet cloak by Syloson, the brother of Polycrates, the tyrant of Samos. This trifling incident appears to have induced Herodotus to introduce a digression concerning the history of Samos and the power of Polycrates. A doctor in the service of this Polycrates was caried to Susa, where he cured a very bad sprain in

the ancle of Darius, and subsequently induced the great king to send spies to European Greece. We thus obtain a pleasing narrative of the first move made by Persia in this direction.

Book IV. continues the main thread of Persian history, and comprehends a narrative of the celebrated expedition of Darius Hystaspis against the Scythians of Southern Russia and the Crimea. Darius was unsuccessful, but it was this expedition which first opened Europe to the Persians. The story of the invasion leads Herodotus to describe the various tribes which at that time occupied the provinces of Southern Russia between the Danube and the Wolga, together with their manners, religion, and condition.

About the same time Pheretime, the queen of the important Greek colony of Cyrene in eastern Tripoli, obtained the assistance of a Persian army against the Barcæans. This expedition was not of much importance, but it gave Herodotus the opportunity of relating the history of Cyrene, and of introducing a long description of the barbarous nations of northern Africa as an interesting companion to his description of the Scythian tribes.

Book V. still pursues the thread of Persian history. After the failure of his Scythian expedition, Darius Hystaspis had left his general Megabazus behind him in Europe with a portion of the Persian army. Megabazus achieved the conquest of the Thracians and Macedonians who occupied the regions south of the Danube, and thus brought the Persians nearer to the Greek frontier. Meantime, the Ionians and other Greeks on the western shores of Asia Minor revolted from the Persian sway, and hurried on the struggle betwixt Persia and Greece. Aristagoras besought Athens and Sparta to assist in the revolt; upon which Herodotus continues the history of the two states from the point where he had left it in Book I., and particularly describes the rapid rise of the Athenians

after throwing off the yoke of the Pisistratids. The enterprising spirit of this young republic is then shown by the interest it took in the Ionian revolt, which being rashly begun and injudiciously carried on, terminated in a total defeat (Book VI.). Herodotus next pursues the increasing causes of animosity betwixt Persia and Greece, and annexes a detailed explanation of the relations and enmities of the Greek states just preceding the Persian war. The expedition sent by Darius Hystaspis to punish Athens for her interference in the Ionian revolt, was the first blow struck by Persia at the mother-country of Greece; and the battle of Marathon, which speedily ensued, was the first glorious signal that this Asiatic power, hitherto unchecked in its encroachments, had at length found its limit.

Book VII. commences with the death of Darius Hystaspis and the accession of his son Xerxes. The history now flows on in a regular channel. Herodotus describes the vast preparations for the expedition of Xerxes, the progress of the army, and the conduct of the Greek campaign; but the narrative moves at a slow pace, and keeps the expectation upon the stretch. The description of the march and mustering of the Persian array gives the reader full time and opportunity for forming a distinct and complete notion of its enormous force; whilst the account of the negociations of the Greek states affords an equally clear conception of those jealousies and dissensions which render the ultimate issue of the contest the more astonishing. After the preliminary and undecisive battles of Thermopylæ and Artemisium (Book VIII.), comes the decisive victory of the Greek allies at Salamis, which Herodotus describes with the greatest vividness and animation. In Book IX. this is followed by the description of the contemporaneous battles of Platæa and Mycale, with the other measures of the Greeks for turning their successes to account; and the whole work abruptly con-

cludes with the supposed sentiment of the great Cyrus, that effeminate men spring from fruitful countries, and that it is better to be lords in a barren land than to be slaves in fertile plains.

The reader will now be able to form some idea of the character of this great prose epic. The vast body of experience and information possessed by Herodotus was carefully elaborated into an intricate and extensive plan, such as had never perhaps been contemplated by any previous Greek historian, and certainly had never been developed. Herodotus has thus been called the Homer of history. As the Iliad and Odyssey appeared to comprehend all the information possessed by the Greeks in the time of Homer, so the history of the Persian war comprehended all the information which Herodotus could collect concerning Asia and Greece, and a vast amount of collateral information concerning Africa and Europe. The great object of Herodotus was to combine with the history of the conflict between the East and West a vivid picture of the contending nations and biographical anecdotes of the leading actors; and notwithstanding the extent of his subject, which comprehends nearly all the nations of the known world, the narrative is constantly advancing. The work is likewise interspersed with chequered speeches; but these serve rather to enforce certain general ideas, particularly concerning the envy of the gods and the danger of pride, than to characterise the dispositions, views, and modes of thought of the persons represented as speaking. In fact, these speeches are rather the lyric than the dramatic part of the history of Herodotus; and if compared with the different parts of a Greek tragedy, they correspond, not to the dialogue, but to the choral songs. But the style in which Herodotus wrote his history is one

of the greatest charms of his work. Although a Dorian by birth, he had learned the Ionic dialect whilst at Samos, and he now adopted it, like the historians who preceded him, with its uncontracted terminations, its accumulated vowels, and its soft forms. The harmonious tones of this liquid dialect were rendered still more agreeable by the charming facility of his language, which closely resembled the flowing discourse of a pleasant speaker. Reading the history of Herodotus is thus like hearing some gossiping but still dignified person, who has seen and lived through an infinite variety of the most remarkable things, and whose greatest delight consists in recalling the images of the past and in perpetuating their remembrance amongst his eager and unwearied listeners.

And now, having described the book, we revert once more to its writer. His farm and his History were the two great objects of his life, from the day he received his allotment of land as a Thurian colonist, to that day when his eyes were closed for ever. His farm afforded him health and exercise; his book—which even to this day remains unfinished—served to occupy his leisure; and the society of a select circle of friends, and the occasional entertainment of some travelling merchant or veteran skipper, formed the principal pleasures of his social hours.

Our readers, however, must by no means regard Herodotus as a lonely old widower. About three or four years after his landing at Thurium, he suddenly began to find the management of his household to be irksome and wearisome. His farm was the admiration of the colony; but his dwelling-house began to disgust, partly by its solitude and partly by its disorder. He had often been reminded, especially by some fathers of rather plain daughters, that it was the duty of every citizen to rear up a strong and healthy family for the good of the colony. He had likewise himself frequently thought of adopting a son, according to the Greek custom, and thus leave

behind him some one to perpetuate his name, and make the usual offerings at his grave. The memory of his lost wife and family had generally driven all such ideas from his mind; but a circumstance took place at this time which once again led him to think about the marriage-state.

At one of those joyous spring-time festivals which lit up, like sunbeams, the national religion of Hellas, the attention of our literary farmer — now about forty-five years of age, — was especially attracted by the blooming appearance of the unmarried daughters of one of the most esteemed of the Thurian citizens. The glorious climate which prevailed in Southern Italy, had indeed given a healthy glow to the pale cheek of many a fair maiden from Athens; whilst, in the more free and unrestrained intercourse of colonial life, the maidens were no longer kept so constantly in the dull seclusion of the women's apartments, or so perpetually and unhealthily engaged at spinning, weaving, or embroidery. The sight of these handsome ladies began to call up in the mind of Herodotus some brilliant visions of a far brighter home than he at that time possessed. The next day the other idea struck him, — namely, the necessity which existed for the adoption of a son who should inherit his name and possessions, perpetuate the family sacrifices, and make the customary offerings at his tomb. He found, however, that he wanted an adviser upon the subject; and accordingly, after some little consideration, he determined on consulting the wise and happy father of the blooming maidens whom he had seen at the yesterday's festival. He therefore walked into the agora, and there he saw the citizen in question; and, after some general conversation upon the news of the day, introduced the subject of the adoption. What passed we cannot say; but, two months afterwards, Herodotus was married to Anthea, the eldest daughter of Philochorus, and the very lady who had most attracted his admiration on

the day of the festival. How many years Herodotus was older than his bride we never will declare; but this we will assert, that the lives of both he and his new wife were rendered ten times happier by the auspicious union. Children sprang up and strewed their path with flowers, and Herodotus once more recovered his former joyousness, and began to have satisfaction in the present, and hope for the future.

CHAP. XLVIII.

ATHENS, B. C. 427.

HERODOTUS DETERMINES TO PAY A LAST VISIT TO ATHENS. — THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ATHENIAN EMPIRE.—ATHENS IN ALL HER GLORY. —HOSPITALITY OF OLD CAPTAIN PHYLARCHUS.—PLEASANT DISCOURSE. —MARVELLOUS REPRESENTATIONS OF THE GODS OF HELLAS. — GENIUS OF PHIDIAS. — THE ODEIUM. — THE THEATRE. — SOPHOCLES. — ARISTOPHANES. — THE ACROPOLIS. — TEMPLE OF WINGLESS VICTORY. — THE PROPYLÆA. — BRONZE STATUE OF ATHENA PROMACHOS. — THE PARTHENON. — STATUE OF ATHENA PARTHENOS OF GOLD AND IVORY. — THE ERECTHEUM. — A DREAM.

It was in the fifth year of the great Peloponnesian war—the year B. C. 427.—that the Athenian embassy described in our first chapter, arrived at Thurium, and the Samian skipper, whose conversation had so much pleased our old historian, was entertained in the house of Herodotus. Sixteen years had passed away since our traveller had first landed at Thurium, and it was now the thirteenth of his marriage with Anthea. Herodotus was thus fast approaching his fifty-eighth year. His historical labours seemed to be verging towards a conclusion, but he had felt for some time a strong desire to pay a last visit to Athens, that city which had attained to such a height of glory and magnificence under the administration of the mighty Pericles. He longed to gaze upon those splendid and unrivalled works of art which Pericles had profusely scattered over Athens with all the lavish affection with which a gorgeous monarch decorates the charms of a chosen bride. He ardently wished to hold familiar and inquiring converse with her energetic and highly-gifted citizens, that he might if possible collect fresh stores of

information, and obtain fresh confirmation of many of the facts which he had already set down in his history. Circumstances, however, had hitherto disabled him from accomplishing his wish; but his conversation with the old sailor gave fresh keenness to his desire. His farm and household were all in admirable order, and there was no reason why he should not at once execute his purpose. He therefore made up his mind with all the promptitude of his early years, and resolved upon undertaking the voyage. He placed his affairs in the hands of his father-in-law, and bade a loving farewell to his wife and children, and then embarked on board the Samian merchantman in the manner described in our first chapter.

Whilst the austere aristocracy of Sparta still retained the general supremacy on land, the rich and ambitious democracy of Athens had created the finest fleet the world had ever seen, and acquired the supremacy of the sea. Whilst Sparta had remained the mistress of the Peloponnesus, Athens had become the mistress of the Ægean. After the glorious victories of Platæa and Mycale, and the final expulsion of the Persians from Hellas, the Greeks, as we have already seen, became the aggressive party. They formed a confederation for freeing the islands and coasts of the Ægean from the Persian yoke, and for making the Æolians, Ionians, and Dorians of Asia Minor an outpost of Hellas against the Persian power. Sparta had hitherto possessed the headship of Hellas, but, after the formation of this new confederation, her want of a fleet, and her insolence to the allies, enabled the aspiring Athens to take her place. Athens then acted with the utmost tact and circumspection. The amount of contribution of money and ships to be paid by each ally was settled to the satisfaction of the confederates. The small but sacred island of Delos was appointed to be the treasury. Cimon the Athenian was made admiral of the confederate fleet, and Aristides the Athenian was se-

lected to administer the funds. The great objects of the confederation were to establish the freedom of the Greek cities and colonies in the Ægean, and to keep the sea itself clear from Persian ships and marauding pirates. Consequently it was to the general advantage that every one of the maritime states should contribute its quota. The state which refused would be partaking of the advantage without sharing in the expense. Accordingly no maritime city or colony was allowed to secede from the confederacy; and those who endeavoured to desert were at once compelled by the united strength of the confederates to return to their duties and engagements.

Within thirty or forty years Athens had converted the confederate states into a subject empire. Some had been originally allowed to send their ships without men, on condition of paying additional contributions of money, and thus degenerated from hardy warriors into timid agriculturists and traders. Others had tried to secede, but had been severely punished by Athens, their ships and defences destroyed, and themselves reduced like the others to the condition of mere tribute-payers. Meantime Athens had enlarged her fleets, and unceasingly exercised her citizens in sea-service, until she found herself possessed of an irresistible navy in the midst of disarmed tributaries. The very treasury of the confederates was removed from Delos to the Athenian Acropolis. Thus Athens became an imperial and a despot city. She maintained that so long as she performed her contract of keeping the Persian fleet at a distance, and preserving the safety of the Ægean waters, the surplus money in the treasury was her own, and she owed no account to the confederates of its expenditure. Thus it was that the Athenian coffers soon ran over with the tributary gold collected from the subject allies, and Pericles, whilst retaining sufficient funds for the exigencies of defence, was enabled to make Athens a city of temples, a gallery of art, and the school of Hellas.

The few days that Herodotus had spent at Athens in his progress from Halicarnassus to Thurium, were passed entirely in the house of Phylarchus; and, with the exception of admiring the mighty long walls which connected the Piræus and Athens, and thus kept up a fortified road between the harbour and the city, he made no attempt to see those wondrous works which even at that time were already in progress. But now he had no grief or anxiety to trouble his mind; and he gave up his whole soul to the contemplation of the glory and grandeur of Athens. Long before the ship reached the Piræus, he saw in the gleaming distance the marble temples and glistening columns of the acropolis; whilst high above all was the helmet plume and spear point of the colossal bronze statue of Athena Promachos, towering above the radiant structures. The terrible war which had broken out with Sparta only seemed to have increased the imposing splendour of the city. The fortified harbours were crowded not only with merchantmen, but with war ships of extraordinary size and beauty. Triremes, with their three banks of oars, were perpetually in motion for the exercise of rowers and marines. The noise of ship-building, and the ringing tones produced by the manufacture of arms, resounded incessantly from the neighbouring dockyards; whilst merchants from every clime were pouring their rich and varied stores into the Piræus; and everything upon which the eye of the visitor rested, betokened the inexhaustible wealth, the heroic valour, the indomitable energy, the martial spirit, the restless ambition, and the lofty enterprise of the imperial city of fair Athena.

Herodotus of course paid his first visit to his old friend Captain Phylarchus, who had for some years retired upon a sufficient independence, and was quietly spending a green old age in a nautical-looking house in the Piræus. The hoary-headed skipper received his guest with open arms, and especially prevailed upon Herodotus to take up

his abode with him and his wife. The long conversations that ensued between the two friends may be easily imagined. The sight of each other called up a thousand recollections of the past, and a thousand pictures of far distant scenes. The terrible events of the Peloponnesian war which was raging around them were all forgotten by Phylarchus as he joked his old fellow voyager upon his youthful passion for the fair Melissa, and the lovely daughter of Euphorion; whilst even the captain's wife took an unwonted interest in the discourse when Herodotus retorted upon the old sailor by reminding him of the mysterious consultations of the oracles of Delphi and Trophonius in reference to his previously accomplished marriage.

Many, indeed, were the cups of rare old wine that Phylarchus and Herodotus quaffed together in friendly converse about ancient times. Our Thurian traveller heard that Euphorion had been dead some years; that Euphrosyne had married a rich Athenian rake, and had died childless; that Glaucus had been shipwrecked and drowned in a voyage from Ephesus; and that his son Polydorus had been implicated in some treacherous correspondence with Persia, and compelled to fly from Corinth in hopeless poverty. Nearly every one else also with whom Herodotus had previously come in contact were either far away from European Greece, or else had departed to the gloomy regions of the under-world. On the other hand, our traveller could not resist the temptation of explaining to Phylarchus the nature of the literary work upon which he had been for so many years engaged; and even repeated to the old captain some of the favourite passages of the history. The subject was fortunately one of universal interest for every man of Hellas. Not only had Phylarchus many suggestions and corrections to offer upon his own responsibility, but almost every day he collected a company of veteran sailors and grey-headed

soldiers, who could listen with delight to the story of the events of their very early youth, and confirm or contradict some of the less important statements which the author had inserted in his history.

But how shall we describe the pride and exultation with which Herodotus beheld the glory and magnificence of Athens? He was not indeed an Athenian citizen, nor did he belong to the Ionian race. But he, like every Greek in Hellas, was descended from the mighty Hellen, the son of Deucalion, the common ancestor of all the Hellenic peoples. He spoke the same language as the Athenians, and he worshipped the same gods. Athens was thus the pride not only of Attica, but of Hellas. There he saw for the first time the real forms of the Olympic gods in all their divine majesty and spirituality. Art had climbed to Olympus and gazed on the immortals. The deities themselves appeared upon earth, fresh from the chisel of Phidias, in the same purity and beauty as they had appeared to the glowing visions of the epic bards. There in the temples and streets of the imperial city might be seen the deep repose, the light floating gait, the eternal youth or manhood of some one of the mighty divinities of Hellas. The gods of Olympus were revealing themselves in imperishable marble. Zeus, the king of gods and men, enthroned in perfect majesty and repose, ruling with a nod the subject world. The venerable Hera, the matron consort of the highest deity, sitting in grandeur and dignity. Apollo, combining the ideal of youthful beauty with the ideal of youthful strength; lofty, courageous, and proud; his advancing foot and raised arm indicating the constant victor; his glance directed straight forward, denoting the seer of future destinies; his thoughtful forehead marking him out as the leader of the Muses. Athena, the wise, the holy, and the dignified virgin, serious and reserved as befitted her maidenhood; armed and fully clad, not as a mere

goddess of war delighting in the tumult of battle, but as a celestial protectress, an ordering wisdom repressing the unbridled passions of the conflict. Dionysus, the renovating and life-restoring deity, awakening to a divine and eternal joy. Artemis, the pure and joyous maiden, roving over hill and dale in the invigorating exercise of the chase, protected, not like Athena by a breastplate and ægis, but by the veil of unsophisticated innocence. Heracles, the toil-tested son of Alcmena, the highest ideal of invincible and inexhaustible strength, manifesting his powers in his firm muscles and brazen frame. The goddess of passion, the seaborn Aphrodite, in after ages perverted into a goddess of sensual delight, but there veiled like virtuous love, the ideal of moral beauty adorned with the highest grace. There, too, were Poseidon and Hades, Hestia and Demeter, the Muses, the Graces, and the Satyrs, and countless other divine forms, which called up to the soul of Herodotus a thousand dreams and memories which have for ever vanished from the world.

The heathenism of the Greeks was indeed arrayed by Phidias in irresistible charms. To the Greeks art was a divine revelation; the artist was the preacher; the marbles were themselves the gods of Hellas. Can we then be surprised that Herodotus should have forgotten the words of Nehemiah, as he beheld the spirituality, the beauty, and the purity of those glorious representations of his country's gods?

Athens was full of life. The streets, the market-place, the assemblies, the porticoes of the temples, were as crowded as at the time of his previous visit by restless and eager citizens. Herodotus moved amongst them like a bewildered man. He had stepped from the solitude of his farm into the busiest city in Hellas. He attended some of the assemblies at the Pnyx; but Pericles had died two or three years before, and the bema was held by a succession

of noisy demagogues, whose stormy oratory distracted and disgusted the more thoughtful Thurian. He heard the musical and poetical representations in the Odeium. He visited the great stone theatre of Dionysus, and beheld the masterpieces of Sophocles, who had already taken the place of the lofty and impressive Æschylus, and was raising the dramatic art to a still higher pitch of excellence. Whilst the genius of Æschylus had overawed our traveller by its grandeur, the genius of Sophocles excited his fervent admiration by its exquisite union of dignity and beauty. A few years later he might have been startled by the bold inventions of the unrivalled Aristophanes, and listened with shouts of laughter to his stinging satire and irresistible wit. How far he might have sympathised with the licentious attacks of the daring dramatist upon the gods, the institutions, and the people of Athens, we must leave the reader to determine; but the vulgar and insolent orators of the Pnyx were already leading the experienced old Thurian to indulge in the same train of thought as that already beginning to be pursued by the youthful Aristophanes. Both were ready to believe that Athens was really happier in the good old days of ignorance, when the Athenian seaman knew nothing more than how to call for his barley cake and cry Yo, ho, than now, when she suffered herself to be ruled by shallow and reckless demagogues who had sprung from her very dregs.

But if the mighty soul of Pericles had passed away, his works remained behind, and Herodotus gladly turned from the Pnyx to the Acropolis. The glorious structures on that immortal platform could rouse and elevate the soul of the Athenian as much as the magic eloquence which had fallen from the lips of their departed statesman. Even in the distant colony of Thurium many a voyager from Athens had told to curious and exulting listeners of the splendour of the edifices with which Pericles had covered the Acropolis. The marble Propylæa or entrance,

designed by the great Mnesicles, with a gallery of paintings in one wing and an inexhaustible arsenal in the other. The Parthenon, or Virgin's House, containing the wondrous colossal statue of Athena the Virgin, which had been shaped by the hand of Phidias from the whitest ivory and the purest gold. The half-restored Erechtheum, the most revered of all the sanctuaries of Athens, containing the ancient olive-wood statue of Athena Polias, which had fallen from heaven, and the olive tree which Athena had called from the earth, and the saltspring which Poseidon had produced from the rock when the two deities had contested the possession of the land. These and numerous other temples, altars, and statues, which crowded the Acropolis, were repeatedly visited by Herodotus, and excited his admiration and delight beyond all the golden wonders of Persepolis and Babylon; and we will endeavour, however feebly, to follow in his footsteps, and gaze around us with kindred enthusiasm.

We will be Athenians returning after years of service on distant shores to our hallowed fatherland. We pass through the babble of the agora, and approach the rocky slope of our holy Acropolis, to behold the mighty works which Athens has reared during the years we have been away. The road up the slope is paved with slabs of Pentelic marble; but on either side are narrower stairs for the use of the humbler pilgrim on foot. Above us are the grand pillars of the Propylæa or entrance, all of the finest Pentelic marble. We ascend the side stairs on our right; for before entering we desire to gaze on the little temple of Wingless Victory.

Nike, or Victory, is generally figured as a young female with golden wings, but Nike Apteros, or Victory without Wings, is the goddess that never deserts the fortunes of Athens, and is called Nike Athena. Her little temple, the prettiest miniature of a temple in all Hellas, stands just before the right wing of the Propylæa. It is

twenty-seven feet long, eighteen feet wide, and twenty-three feet high. It consists of a little cella, built of Pentelic marble, having a cheerful portico at each end, consisting respectively of four graceful Ionic pillars. The frieze on every side represents in full relief the glorious victories of Athens. In the interior of the cella is the sacred and venerable wooden image of the Wingless Goddess. In her right hand she holds a pomegranate, the symbol of plenty; in her left she holds a helm, the symbol of warlike bravery. Beautiful goddess! mayest thou never desert the fortunes of Athens.

But we turn to the Propylæa, one of the masterpieces of Athenian art, and upon which half a million has already been expended. The structure is composed entirely of Pentelic marble, and covers the whole western end of the Acropolis, which is here 168 feet in breadth. It combines serenity with grandeur. The central building has six mighty Doric columns in front, from whence, like an eagle, it spreads out a protecting wing on either side. The six Doric columns support a pediment, whilst three Ionic pillars on each side support the roof of the portico. Five separate gates of wood, elaborately carved, and richly gilded, lead us through the six columns towards the temples in the interior of the Acropolis. We pass through the central and widest entrance, and find ourselves in a pillared doorway nearly fifty feet in depth. The ceiling is beautifully coloured; and on either side are costly works in bronze and marble, set up as votive gifts. The left, or northern wing, is a gallery of pictures; the right, or southern wing, which faces the beautiful little temple of Wingless Victory, is an arsenal for stores. Passing through the pillared doorway, we find that the portico facing the interior of the Acropolis corresponds with the front portico.

The Propylæa has prepared us for the contemplation of the magnificent works now before us. On our left is the

gigantic bronze statue of Athena Promachos, executed by Phidias from the booty of Marathon. In her left hand she holds the raised shield; in her right she brandishes the threatening spear. Thus, as the warlike protectress of the state, she terrifies every approaching foe.

On our right, and on the highest part of the Acropolis, stands the Parthenon, the temple of Athena the virgin goddess. It is grand and chaste beyond all conception; simple in its beauty, solemn in its repose, and divine in its serenity. It does not impress us by its colossal proportions, but by its marvellous beauty and harmony. The massive and closed cella is sufficiently relieved by the range of pillars which runs along each of its four sides. The porticoes at the two ends are each formed of eight Doric pillars; the colonnades along the sides are each formed of fifteen pillars. The sculptures on the outside commemorate the history and the honours of Athena and of Athens. The pediment over the eastern or principal portico, and that over the western or back portico, are each nearly eighty feet in length, and are each filled with a composition in sculpture consisting of about twenty-four colossal figures. The eastern pediment represents the birth of Athena; the western represents the contest between Athena and Poseidon for the land of Attica. The metopes between the triglyphs in the frieze of the entablature represent the exploits of the goddess Athena, and those of the indigenous heroes of Attica. The frieze, which runs along outside the wall of the cella, and within the external columns which surround the temple, is sculptured with a representation of the great Panathenaic festival. The portico at the eastern end, and that at the western end, both lead towards the cella. The cella itself, however, is divided into two chambers. The largest and principal chamber is the cella proper, and contains the statue of the goddess; this is entered at the eastern or principal portico. The smaller chamber is the treasury,

and is entered at the western portico. The temple is lighted from the roof.

We pass through the eastern portico and enter the cella proper. On every side we see the costliest works in statuary and painting. Close behind the artificial opening of the roof rises, in commanding majesty, the gigantic statue of Athena Parthenos, forty feet high, one of the most renowned works of the immortal Phidias. The unclothed parts are of the whitest ivory; the dress and ornaments are of solid gold. A long garment falls in massive and graceful folds to the feet of the goddess, and is enriched at the breast with an ivory mask of Medusa. The head of the goddess is covered by a helmet, having a sphinx on the top and a griffin carved in relief on each side. In her left hand she bears a spear, round which twines the sacred snake of the Acropolis; in her right hand is the golden figure of Nike, the Goddess of Victory; at her feet leans her glittering shield. On the base of the statue is represented the birth of Pandora; along the edge of her sandals is represented the victory over the Centaurs. On her shield are delineated her other conquests; outside is the battle with the Amazons; inside is the conflict with the Giants.

Overcome by beauty, we turn towards the north. We proceed towards a much smaller temple built in the Ionian style, and we leave the commanding majesty and serenity of the Parthenon for the easy elegance and alluring grace of the Erechtheum. The structure is enigmatical. It has three porticoes, and includes the sanctuaries of all the gods and heroes whose worship was enjoined to the citizens of Athens. Here are the ancient olive-wood statue of the goddess Athena, the saltspring of Poseidon, and the olive tree of Athena. Here, too, dwelt the mysterious serpent of the Acropolis. But we care not to lose ourselves in the mazes of the old religion; we desire only to recall the grandeur and glory of Athens.

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It is the morning of the great festival of the Panathenæa. The golden summer sun is lighting up groves and temples. The whole population of Athens are coming in procession from the flowery groves of the Cerameicus to the ancient abode of their fathers. We hear the choral hymns and music of fifes and flutes, the mingled hum of men and noise of horses and chariots. On come the joyous Demos to the beating of drums and clashing of cymbals. The priests in their sacred robes, the victims garlanded for the sacrifices, the old men waving their olive branches, the young men brandishing their gleaming arms, maidens of surpassing loveliness decked with the choicest flowers; whilst, high above the heads of all, is carried the sacred Peplos for the heaven-born image of Athena. The mighty crowd are moving up the slope. The doors of the Propylæa swing open amidst exulting shouts; and in pour the countless multitude to the wonderful fortress, the famous in song, where the glorious Demos are masters.

CHAP. XLIX.

CONCLUSION.

HERODOTUS'S RETURN TO THURIUM.—EGYPTIAN LINENS AND BABYLONIAN COTTONS. — EVENING READINGS. — CHARACTER OF HERODOTUS'S LISTENERS. — OLD AGE AND ITS INFIRMITIES. — DEATH. — FUNERAL CEREMONIES.—FUNERAL ORATION.

HERODOTUS returned to Thurium full of the wonders which he had witnessed at Athens. All things had passed happily and satisfactorily during his absence. His wife and children received him with rejoicings. His fellow-citizens crowded around him, and heartily congratulated him upon his safe return from the mother country. Even the slaves of the house and the farm were glad enough to see the face of their old master, and to be subject once more to his paternal and kindly rule.

The remaining years of Herodotus's life passed smoothly away, unchequered by any of those severe pains and reverses which are but too often the lot of mortal man. Of minor evils he had perhaps his fair share. Sometimes the harvest failed, or the vintage turned out badly, or some of the cattle were carried off by disease. Once, whilst he was away at Crotona, his wife Anthea was induced by a lying Cretan merchant to barter a quantity of prime salted beef for some beautifully dyed Egyptian linens. Accordingly, on his return to Thurium, he found her arrayed in the most brilliant colours, rejoicing in being able to welcome her husband back in such new and radiant attire. Of course Herodotus was speedily informed of which the wonderful bargains had been made. "Thanks," he cried, "to the ever-equalising Nemesis;

our loss, fair wife, may satisfy the goddess and avert greater evils. The Egyptian linens are only Babylonian cottons of the worst quality. The patterns, too, are execrable; but never mind, they will all wash out with the first touch of water."

With advancing years Herodotus was gradually regarded as one of the fathers of the colony. His opinions were respectfully asked, and his arbitrations were earnestly desired. The serene dignity of the venerable traveller was enlivened, too, by a cheerfulness and mild gaiety which made him a general favourite. An imperceptible change crept over his habits. In his youth he had taken the greatest delight in the company of the aged; but now, as he himself grew grey-headed and full of years, he loved the company of those who had proceeded but a little way along the weary road of life. To listen to his stories of ancient Hellas and his accounts of distant and barbarian shores, was considered by the young men of Thurium, and even by their fathers, as one of the greatest pleasures in the world, as amusing as an epic rhapsody, and as instructive as a legend of the gods. On the other hand, the old man was never weary of discoursing. Every morning at sunrise he took his staff and slowly trudged over his farm. When this duty was accomplished, he walked to the agora and heard the news. Then he returned to his house, and usually spent the remainder of the day sitting in his portico and conversing with all who chose to stay and listen to his sayings or narratives. Sometimes, when he had forgotten some fact which he wished to relate, he would enter his house, and bring out some of the scrolls of his history, and read them aloud. Gradually this occasional reading became more and more frequent; and at last the old man regularly brought out his book every day, and read a portion to a considerable audience of eager and attentive listeners.

Such was the origin of the fame which in after ages

glowed with an immortal halo round the pages of the Father of History. Every man in Thurium became acquainted with the charming narratives of their venerable and experienced fellow-citizen. It is not difficult to describe the spirit in which such an inquisitive, credulous, and simple-minded audience listened to such a comprehensive but easily flowing history. The age of Crœsus, of Cyrus, and of Pisistratus, was the age of romance, and was probably regarded by the Thurians in the same light as we regard the Crusades. Babylon and Susa were almost as distant to them as was Pekin to the French academicians of the last century. A critic would have asked for authorities, but few of such critics were there. Besides, Herodotus either described scenes which he had himself seen, or which had been seen by those who described them to him, or he related facts which had been the common talk for two generations. His auditors were as susceptible as himself of religious awe or patriotic enthusiasm. They were the very men to hear with delight of crocodiles, winged serpents, and gold-guarding griffins; of man-eaters, goat-footed men, and people who slept for six months at a stretch; of Egyptian deities whose very name it was impiety to utter; of ancient kings who reigned ten thousand years ago, and left behind them pyramids, temples, and palaces surpassing the most magnificent structures of Hellas; of Oriental cities vast as provinces, and splendid as empires; of rivers whose sources no man had ever reached, and of mysterious deserts which no man had ever traversed; of the rites which the Magians performed at sunrise on the tops of mountains, and of the secrets inscribed on the eternal obelisks of Memphis; of the wild and bloody practices of the Scythian nomads, and of the long-lived and gigantic men who inhabited the shadowy realms of Ethiopia and Meroë. With still greater interest and delight, the curious and believing Thurians listened to the graceful romances connected with

the history of Hellas; of obscure predictions of national oracles, and of their exact and mysterious accomplishment; of the punishment of fearful crimes by the slow but certain sword of the avenging Nemesis; of dreams, omens, and warnings from the dead; of heroes rewarded by marriage with beautiful and noble princesses; of infants miraculously preserved from the dagger of the assassin to fulfil high destinies. Last of all, as the narrative advanced, the interest of the listeners was absorbed by the thrilling story of the invasion of Hellas; that story which is still the most wonderful in all the annals of man. Young and old listened with breathless attention to the narrative of that terrible time, when all the armies of Asia were united in one endless array to crush the states of Greece; when the millions of Xerxes poured over the bridges of the Hellespont, drank up a river in a day, and famished a province by a single meal. Then the gods fought for Hellas; then the Greeks fought side by side like brothers, and Athens and Sparta led the van; until at last disciplined heroism and desperate valour won the day; the armaments of Asia were scattered to the winds, and Thermopylæ and Salamis became immortal names.

Thus the later years of Herodotus glided slowly away, until at last the old man could no longer walk, and could only sit in his pleasant portico and meditate upon the scenes of his youth, and sometimes cast a thought upon the under-world to which he was fast hastening. He watched the sun in its course through the heavens, and tried to call up the picture of the lands over which the radiant god made its daily journey. He watched the sun in its setting, and thought, but without terror, of the grave to which he would soon be consigned. His children were all settled around him. He had found farms for his sons and husbands for his daughters. His affectionate wife, though many years younger than he, was fast approaching the verge of old age. He made his will

according to the Athenian law; and nothing now remained but to wait patiently for the approach of the relentless deity to bear him away to the world of shadows.

Death came not without its usual warnings, but Herodotus was rapidly verging towards his eightieth year; and neither doctors, nor interpreters of dreams, nor charms, nor expiations could avert the stroke. For many days every citizen in Thurium was aware that the last hour of the old traveller was near at hand; and at last it was whispered in the agora that Herodotus had breathed his last, and that his shade had followed the shades of his fathers. Grief sat on every face; all public business was at once suspended; and the magistrates only obeyed the unanimous feeling of the colonists when they decreed that the ashes of the old historian should be buried in the public market-place, with all the customary ceremonies of a public funeral.

Sorrow, silence, and solemnity, now filled the chamber of the departed sage. The obol was placed between his lips for the payment of the gloomy ferryman in Hades. The body was washed, and anointed with perfumed oils, and then arrayed in the white funeral garments, and laid in order on the couch. The head was crowned with freshly gathered flowers. The honey-cake for Cerberus was laid beside the body. The vessel of water was placed at the door of the chamber, that all who came to take one last look at the sad remains might purify themselves by sprinkling. Relations and mourners sat round the couch, and expressed their grief by their tears and lamentations.

On the third day after the bereavement the funeral was performed according to the customs of Hellas. In the first dawn of the morning, and even before the sun had risen, the procession left the house. At the express wish of the aged traveller, his body was to be burnt upon a pyre. First walked the hired mourners, playing mournful tunes upon their flutes, and arrayed, like the relatives

and friends, in black himations. Next followed the male friends; then the corpse, covered with a purple pall, half hidden with chaplets of flowers, and carried upon the couch on which it had lain, by the nearest male relatives; and last of all walked the female mourners, weeping and lamenting. The funeral pyre had been erected in the market-place, and the whole population of Thurium assembled there to witness the melancholy ceremony. The bier was laid upon the pile, and rich unguents were poured upon it, every one striving to throw in a box of ointment as a last libation to the memory of the old Thurian. A blazing link was then applied to the pile, and the whole was enveloped in the devouring flames. The raging fire soon consumed the pile and its sacred burden, and was then quenched by heavy libations of wine. The bones were collected by the weeping relatives, and washed with oil and wine, and placed in the sepulchral urn. Lastly, when the interment was concluded, the principal orator in Thurium advanced from the grave to a platform, which had already been prepared, and thus addressed the assembled multitude.

"Citizens of Thurium! We have this morning performed the funeral rites for one of the founders of our colony; for one who was dear to the hearts of all present; for one whom we lament, as children lament for a departed parent.

"Forty years have passed away since Herodotus the son of Lyxes first landed with our fathers upon these peaceful shores. For forty years we have known and loved him. His life had been one of vast experience, not only of the different cities of Hellas, but of barbarous nations and of distant climes. He had visited the wintry plains of Scythia and the burning sands of Ethiopia. He had moved amongst the democracy of Athens and the slaves of the Great King. He had gazed on the temples of Memphis and Thebes, and on the palaces of Babylon and Susa.

But yet was he mild and unassuming as a youth of Sparta; as pious and retiring as a maiden of Athens; as calm and serene as a hero of the olden time. He won the love of our children and the respect of our citizens. He has died in glory and honour. His virtues will bear him to the Elysian Fields. His name will be inscribed not only upon his monumental stone, but also in the unwritten memorial of our hearts.

"But how shall I speak of those histories to which we have so often listened; of those books which have obtained for him an immortal renown and a place in the eternal memory of man? From our youth we have sat at his feet and treasured up his words. From our youth his discourse has stirred us like the pæan of the battle, or melted us like the sorrow of a mother. Happily for our children, those books still remain with us, and shall be treasured in the archives of our prosperous city; and ever on the appointed days when our youths and maidens shall garland his tomb with flowers and his children shall offer their ancestral sacrifices, those immortal scrolls shall be read aloud to the assembled multitudes, that ages yet unborn may preserve the remembrance of their fathers' deeds and the name of the best and wisest of their citizens."

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER II.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE PRINCIPAL DIVINE BEINGS IN THE GREEK MYTHOLOGY.

It may be convenient to some of our readers if we here sum up the different members of the divine race, and at the same time add the Latin equivalents to the Greek names wherever necessary, and mark the long *e* and *o* (*η*, *ω*) by a circumflex when they occur in the last syllable or in the penultimate of a name.

I. *Gods prior to Zeus.*

1. Chaos, a confused mixture of material atoms, instinct with the principle of life.
2. Gæa or Earth, Tartarus, and Erôs, sprang from Chaos.
3. Erebus and Nyx, or Night, also rose from Chaos.
4. Æther and Hêmera, or Day, sprang from Erebus and Nyx.
5. Uranos, or Heaven, sprang from Earth, but subsequently became her partner.
6. Titans, Titanides, Cyclôpes, and Hecatoncheires, or Hundred-handed Giants, sprang from the union of Heaven and Earth.
7. Cronos, or Saturn, the youngest Titan, married his sister Rhea the Titanide, and became the father of

Hadês,	Hestia,
Poseidôn,	Dêmêtêr, and
Zeus,	Hêra.

II. *The Twelve great Gods and Goddesses of Olympus under the supremacy of Zeus.*

1. Zeus, or Jupiter, the god of heaven and air.
2. Poseidôn, or Neptune, the god of the sea and of earthquakes.
3. Apollo, the god of prophecy and song.
4. Arês, or Mars, the god of war.
5. Hêphæstus, or Vulcan, the god of fire, and worker in metals.
6. Hermês, or Mercury, the messenger of the gods.
7. Hêra, or Juno, the wife of Zeus.
8. Athêna, or Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, &c.
9. Artemis, or Diana, the virgin huntress.
10. Aphroditê, or Venus, the goddess of love.
11. Hestia, or Vesta, the domestic goddess.
12. Dêmêtêr, or Ceres, the goddess of agriculture, &c.

III. *An indefinite number of Deities, some of whom were apparently not inferior in power or dignity to many of the Twelve, but who were not included amongst the Olympian Gods, seemingly because the number Twelve was complete without them.*

1. Hadês, or Pluto, the ruler of the under-world of departed spirits.
2. Hêlios, or Sol, the sun-god.
3. Hecatê, an infernal divinity.
4. Dionysus, or Bacchus, the inspiring god of wine.
5. Lêtô or Latona, the mother of Apollo and Artemis.
6. Persephonê, Proserpine, the daughter of Dêmêtêr and wife of Hadês.
7. Selênê, or Luna, the Moon.
8. Themis, or Law, the mother of the Fates and Horæ, and of Peace, Order, and Justice.
9. Eôs, or Aurora, the Dawn.
10. The Three Charites, or Graces.

11. The Nine Muses.
12. Eileithya, the goddess of childbirth.
13. The Three Mœræ, or Fates.
14. The Nymphæ, comprising (*a*) Oceanides, the daughters of Oceanus and nymphs of the ocean; (*b*) Nereides, daughters of Nereus, and nymphs of the Mediterranean, or inner sea; (*c*) Potameides, nymphs of rivers; (*d*) Naiades, nymphs of fresh water generally, whether of rivers, lakes, brooks, or springs; (*e*) Oreades, or nymphs of mountains and grottoes; (*f*) Dryades, or nymphs of oaks or forest trees; (*g*) Melides, or nymphs of fruit-trees; (*h*) nymphs connected with certain races or localities, and therefore named after them, such as Nysiades, Dodonides, Lemniae, &c.
15. Sea deities, such as Nêreus, Prôteus, Phorkys, &c.
16. Nemesis, the retributive and equalising deity and goddess of conscience.
17. The Erinnyes, the Furies or avenging deities.

And several others of less celebrity.

IV. *Deities who performed special services to the greater Gods.*

1. Iris, the rainbow, and sometimes the messenger of Zeus and Hêra.
2. Hêbê, the cup-bearer to the gods.
3. The Horæ, goddesses of the seasons, and weather, and ministers of Zeus.

And some others.

V. *Deities whose personality was more faintly and unsteadily conceived.*

1. Atê, the goddess of reckless impulse, and sometimes an avenger like Nemesis and the Erinnyes.
2. Eris, the goddess of discord.
3. Thanatos, the god of death.

And some others.

VI. *Monsters who sprang from the Gods.*

1. The Harpies, the snatchers and tormentors.
2. The Gorgons, frightful beings with wings, brazen claws, enormous teeth, and heads covered with hissing serpents instead of hair.
3. The Grææ, three old women who had grey hair from their birth, and only one tooth and one eye in common.
4. Pêgasus the winged horse, which was born to Medusa, the Gorgon.
5. Echidna, a horrible and blood-thirsty monster, the upper part of whose body was that of a beautiful maiden, whilst the lower part was that of a vast serpent.
6. Chimæra, a fire-breathing monster, the fore part of whose body was that of a lion, the middle that of a goat, and the hind part that of a dragon. She was said to be the daughter of Echidna.
7. The Dragon who assisted the Hesperides in guarding the golden apples.
8. Cerberus, the many-headed dog which guarded the entrance to Hadês.
9. The Centaurs, half horses and half men.
10. The Sphinx.

And some others.

INDEX.

Abacus, i. 23.
Abæ, i. 212.
Abaris, ii. 110.
Abdera, i. 357.
Abraham, call of, ii. 365.
Abydos, i. 367; review of the Persian army at, ii. 311.
Achæmenes, ii. 194. 339.
Achæmenids, royal family of, ii. 296.
Achæans, i. 132.
Achaia, i. 114.
Acre, ii. 380.
Acropolis at Athens, i. 229; Herodotus's first visit to, i. 302; description of, 303; fortified propylæa, *ib.*; old temple of Erechtheus, *ib.*; chapel of Athena the Protectress, 304; glorious structures of the Periclean age, 418.
Actors in the Greek tragedy first added to the chorus by Thespis, ii. 55; by Æschylus, *ib.*; masks and dress of, 56; three in number, 58.
Adonis, i. 42.
Adoption, Greek custom of, ii. 408.
Adrastus purified from his involuntary homicide, ii. 257; causes the death of Atys, 259; commits suicide, 260.
Æacus, i. 56.
Ægaleos, mount, i. 230.
Ægean Sea, i. 15.
Ægina sends earth and water to Darius, i. 151; threatening visit of Cleomenes, 152; imprisonment of ten of her citizens at Athens, 156; complaint against Leotychides, 158; war with Athens, 270.
Ægisthus, legend of, ii. 61.
Ægyptus, i. 118.
Ænus, river, i. 130.
Æolians of Asia Minor, i. 16.
Æolids, legend connected with the family of, i. 365.
Æropus, i. 350.
Æschylus, his trilogy of the Oresteia, ii. 54. 59; performance of, 63; gains the prize, 80.
Æsop, i. 23. 44.
Æther, i. 28; Orphic idea concerning, ii. 111.
Africa, ancient circumnavigation of, ii. 179.
Agamedes, i. 219.
Agamemnon, palace of, at Mycenæ, i. 117.
Agamemnon, play of, number of the chorus in, ii. 58; legends connected with it, 62; representation of the play, 63.
Agathodæmon, or Good Genius, i. 95; figure of, over the Egyptian temples, ii. 141.
Agathoergi, i. 128.
Agathyrsi occupying Transylvania, ii. 35.
Agathyrsus, ii. 24.
Agetus, story of his wife and king Ariston i. 153.
Aglauros, self sacrifice of, i. 306.
Agora, i. 5; the Spartan, 177; the Athenian, 286; Cyrus's remark concerning, ii. 307.
Ahab, ii. 232.
Ahasuerus. See Artaxerxes.
Ahriman, the origin of evil and darkness, ii. 313; doctrines of Zoroaster concerning, *ib.*; introduction of a false Magia, 315; Magian rites in honour of, 342. 359; final destruction of his kingdom, 361.
Alcæus, i. 60.
Alcmæon and the treasury of Crœsus, story of, ii. 262.
Alcmæonids, sacrilege of, i. 236; trial and exile of, 237; unsuccessful attempt to invade Attica in the reign of Hippias, 256; accept the contract for rebuilding the temple at Delphi, 257; corruption of the oracle, *ib.*; return of the Alcmæonids to Athens, 258.
Alexander, king of Macedonia, i. 350; massacre of the Persian envoys, 353; permitted to contend at the Olympic games, 354.
Alexis, i. 288.
Alitta, ii. 231.
Alos, human sacrifices at, i. 366.
Alpheus, river, i. 179. 185.
Altars, first instituted in Egypt, ii. 200.
Altis, grove of, i. 186.
Alutæ, i. 189.
Alyattes, his gift to Delphi, i. 209; war with Astyages, ii. 260; tumulus of, 276.
Amasis, his alliance with Polycrates, i. 53; two wooden statues of, at Samos, 59; curious linen corselet of, *ib.*; encourages Greek merchants, ii. 140; built the propylæa to the temple of Neith, at Sais, 141; tomb of, at Sais, 142; obtains the throne of Egypt, 182; his merry reign, 183; story of his golden footpan, *ib.*; his convivial life, 184; his treatment of the oracles, ib.; miscellaneous events of his reign, 185; his dead body insulted by Cambyses, 191; his alliance with Crœsus, 253.
Amazons, strange story of, ii. 36.
Amber, the tears of the Heliadæ, i. 111.

Ammenemes III., builder of the labyrinth, ii. 199.
Ammon, temple and oracle of, in the Libyan desert, legends concerning, ii. 205.
Ammonium, expedition of Cambyses to, ii. 191.
Amphictyonic council, i. 257, *note*.
Amshaspands, or princes of light, ii. 313.
Amun, the Egyptian, ii. 202; his identity with Zeus, 205; temple and oracle of, at Thebes, *ib*.
Amyclæ, festival at, i. 176.
Amyntas, king of Macedonia, i. 352; story of the massacre of the Persian envoys by his son Alexander, 353.
Anacharsis, the Scythian traveller, story of, ii. 19; slain by his brother Saulius, 20.
Anacreon, i. 44. 53.
Anaxagoras, i. 62.
Anaxandrides, the poet, ii. 213.
Anaxandrides, king, and his two wives, i. 145.
Anaximander, i. 61; his map, 147.
Anaximenes, i. 61.
Anchimolius, i. 257.
Andronitis, i. 5.
Androphagi, ii. 35.
Angareion, ii. 278.
Animal worship of the Egyptians, ii. 210.
Antæ, i. 307.
Anthea, ii. 406.
Ants, Indian, i. 298.
Anysis, the blind king of Egypt, ii. 176.
Aphrodite, birth of, i. 28; temple of, at Corinth, 82; represented in sculpture, ii. 417.
Apis, court of, ii. 158; appears at Memphis, 192; wounded by Cambyses, 193.
Aplustre, the, i. 201.
Apollo, worshipped by the Dorians, i. 16. 30; legend of the birth of, 68; his residence at Delos, 69; golden statue of, on Mount Thornax, 170; temple and oracle of, at Delphi, 206; his appearance in the Eumenides, ii. 72; his character as a purifier, 75. 77; worship of, connected with the teachings of Pythagoras, 107; presented Orpheus with the lyre, 108; connection of Abaris and Aristeas with his worship, 110; identified with the Egyptian Horus, 144; saves Crœsus, 207; represented in sculpture, 416.
Apollonia, ii. 126.
Apples, perfume of, i. 283.
Apries, the Pharaoh Hophra of Scripture, reign of, ii. 182; story of his daughter Nitetis, 187.
Apsinthians, i. 361.
Aqueduct at Samos, i. 57.
Arabia, its wonderful products, i. 298.
Arabian mountains, ii. 136.
Arabs, ii. 230; their contract with Cambyses, 231; strange story of their supplying his army with water, *ib*.; their presents to Darius Hystaspis, 334; appearance in the army of Xerxes, 340.
Arbaces takes Nineveh, ii. 291.
Arbacidæ, dynasty of, ii. 212.
Arcadian hospitality, i. 125.
Arcesilaus, ii. 133.
Archidamus, i. 161.
Archilochus, i. 44.
Archons, i. 233; powers of, under the democracy, 265.
Ardericca, ii. 286.
Areopagus, hill of, i. 232; council of, 235. 247; decreasing powers of, 264.; institution of, by the goddess Athena, ii. 77.
Ares, i. 30; human sacrifices to, amongst the Scythians, ii. 9; identified with the Egyptian Typhon, ii. 144; strange ceremonies connected with his worship, 155.
Arethusa, story of, i. 185.
Argia, story of her two twin sons, i. 132.
Argippæi, their curious food, ii. 40.
Argolis, i. 114.
Argonauts, accompanied by Orpheus, ii. 108 their stay in Lemnos, 128; their descendants called Minyans, *ib*.
Argos, Herodotus's visit there, i. 118; legend of Io, 119; ancient supremacy of Argos, 120; sacrilegious conduct of Cleomenes, 121; alliance with Athens, 123. 311. 315; legend of the Temenids, 350; substituted for Mycenæ throughout the Oresteia of Æschylus, ii. 63.
Argos, the hero, grove of, 121.
Ariapithes, king of Scythia, his Greek wife, ii. 20.
Arimaspea, ii. 110.
Arimaspi, ii. 46.
Arion and the dolphin, story of, i. 202.
Aristagoras and his brazen map, story of, i. 147; his audience with Cleomenes, 148.
Aristeas visits the Hyperboreans, ii. 110; his Arimaspea, *ib*.
Aristides, i. 273; character of, 274; ostracised, 275; recall of, 276; takes the supreme direction of the confederate fleet, 278; his death, 279.
Aristo, i. 249.
Aristodemus, i. 132.
Aristodicus, consults the oracle of Branchidæ respecting Pactyas, ii. 273.
Aristogiton, i. 255.
Ariston, story of his beautiful wife, i. 152.
Aristophanes, ii. 418.
Arithmetic, Greek, i. 23.
Armenian boats, ii. 278.
Armenians in the army of Xerxes, ii. 340.
Arpoxais, ii. 23.
Art, Greek, history of, i. 83; its highest development at Athens, ii. 416; Egyptian art, ii. 141; Babylonian, 283; Persian, 346, 347.
Artabanus, his address to Xerxes, ii. 384.
Artabazanes, ii. 338.
Artaxerxes Longimanus, ii. 343; birthday ceremonies and festivities, 349; the birthday presents, 351; admits Herodotus to an audience, 353; renews the edict of Cyrus, 363; contributions to Ezra and the Jewish nation, 364; story of his queen Esther, 368.
Artayntes, story of, ii. 356.
Artembares, ii. 300.
Artemis, i. 30; temple of, at Delos, 70; altar of Artemis Orthia at Sparta, 139; saves Iphigenia, ii. 62; identified with the Egyptian Pasht, 144; represented in Greek sculpture, 417.
Artemisia, queen, i. 18; life of, 35; her conduct at Salamis, 36; character of her government, 37; her old age, ii. 237. 385, 386.
Artemisium, i. 17.
Aryenis, ii. 260.
Asaph, ii. 377.
Ascalon, ii. 4.
Asiatic empires, character and history of, ii. 288.

Asphodel, i. 179.
Assyrian empire, history of, ii. 290; the old Assyrian empire overthrown by the Medes and Babylonians, 291; the second Assyrian empire overthrown by the Medes, 293.
Astarte, temple of, ii. 4; Phœnician worship of, 232.
Astrabacus, the hero, legend of, i. 171.
Astyages, war with Alyattes, ii. 260; reign of, 296; marriage of Mandane and Cambyses, 297; dreams of Astyages, *ib.*; attempt to assassinate the infant Cyrus, 298; Persian revolt, 304; defeat of Astyages and establishment of the Medo-Persian empire by Cyrus, 305.
Astydamas, i. 170. 204.
Asychis, ii. 158; brick pyramid of, 174; pledging of embalmed bodies, *ib.*
Atarbechis, ii. 210.
Atarneus, ii. 274.
Athamas, legendary account of, i. 365.
Athena, i. 30; temple of Athena Alea at Tegea, 127; temple of Athena Pronæa at Delphi, 208; withdrawal of her protection from the Cylonian suppliants, 237; brings back Pisistratus to Athens, 252; her contest with Poseidon for the soil of Attica, 304; chapel of Athena the Protectress at Athens, *ib.*; old temple of Athena the Virgin, *ib.*; appearance of Athena in the play of Eumenides, ii. 75; institutes the council of the Areopagus, 77; festival of the great Panathenæa in honour of, 81; torch-race in honour of, 83; identified with the Egyptian Neith, 140; statue of Athena Promachos, 414. 421; representation of Athena in Greek sculpture, 416; beautiful temple of Athena the Virgin, 421; statue of Athena Parthenos in gold and ivory, 422.
Athens, i. 3. 7. 17; alliance with Argos, 123; charge against Ægina, 151. 158; assists Sparta against her helots, 166. 167; general view of the city and country, 228; ancient and modern appearance of the public buildings, 229; history of Athens in the time of Moses, Joshua, and the Judges, 233; ancient kings, *ib.*; condition of Attica prior to the time of Solon, *ib.*; political constitution, 231; oligarchy of the nobles or eupatrids, 235; severe legislation of Draco, *ib.*; attempt of Cylon to seize the supreme power, 236; sacrilege of the Alcmæonids, 237; trial and condemnation of the Alcmæonids, *ib.*; pestilence and religious despondency, 238; expiatory rites of Epimenides, 239; threatened anarchy, *ib.*; Solon invited to mediate, 240; his measures, 242; tyranny of the Pisistratids, 248; contest between Isagoras and Clisthenes, 261; Spartan intervention, 267; joins in the Ionian revolt, 273; heroism in the Persian war, *ib.*; contest between Themistocles and Aristides, 274; rebuilding of the walls, 277; Athens at the head of the confederate fleet, 279; Herodotus's first impressions of, 285; the agora, 286; the fish-market, 287; the money-changers, 290; the prytaneum, 292; Herodotus's walk with Euphorion, 300; river Ilissus and Enneacrunos, *ib.*; temple of Olympian Zeus, 301; stone theatre of Dionysus, 302; the Acropolis *ib*; temple of Erechtheus, 303; temple of Athena the Virgin, 304; wooden fortifications, 305; the Long Rocks, *ib.*; temple of Theseus, 306; a sitting dicastery, 307; Herodotus's opinion of Athens, 310; state of political parties, 311; popular assembly at the pnyx, 313; speech of Cimon, 314; speech of Pericles, 317; pursuits and amusements of Herodotus at Athens, 328; the great Dionysia, ii. 48; monopoly of tragedy, 53; establishment of the Athenian empire, 412; Herodotus's last visit to Athens, 414; state of art in the days of Pericles, 416.
Athletæ, Greek, i. 192.
Athor, temple of, ii. 210.
Athos, mount, canal of Xerxes, i. 318.
Atonement, ii. 75, 76.
Atossa, ii. 324; her tumour cured by Demócedes of Crotona, 336; persuades Darius to invade Greece, 337; her son Xerxes, 339.
Atreus, treasury of, i. 117; legend of, ii. 61.
Atridæ, legends connected with the royal family of, ii. 61.
Attica, description of, i. 229; ancient condition of, 233; Attic tribes, 234; separated into the three great parties of lowlanders, highlanders, and sea-coast people, 230. 239; division into demes, 261; contest of Poseidon and Athena for the soil, 304.
Atys, son of Crœsus, story of, ii. 257.
Auchatæ Scythians, ii. 23.
Autonous, the hero, i. 208.
Axus, ii. 131.
Aziris, ii. 133.

Baal, Phœnician worship of, ii. 232.
Babel, tower of, ii. 284.
Babylon, Herodotus's visit to, ii. 278; extraordinary fertility of Babylonia, 279; description of, 280; costume of the people, 281; stupendous walls, 282; royal palace of Nebuchadnezzar, 283; temple of Belus, *ib.*; singular matrimonial auction, 286; no physicians, 287; foundation of the city by Nimrod, 293; siege of, by Cyrus, 308; Belshazzar's feast, 309; capture of the city, 310; revolt of in the reign of Darius Hystaspis, 330; capture of, through the self-sacrificing heroism of Zopyrus, 331; productions and manufactures of, 351.
Babylonian empire, history of, ii. 295.
Babylonian captivity of Judah, its effect on the heathen world, ii. 114. 362.
Babys, i. 201.
Bacchiads at Corinth, i. 78.
Ballot, Athenian, ii. 78.
Banquet, Greek, i. 93; Egyptian, ii. 152; Persian, 352.
Bats, winged, i. 298.
Battus, ii. 130; leads a colony to the Libyan Platea, 131. 133; consults oracle at Delphi concerning his stuttering, 132.
Barathrum at Athens, i. 291, and *note*.
Barber, an Athenian, i. 282.
Beaver hunters, ii. 39.
Beer, Egyptian, ii. 152.
Belesis takes Nineveh, ii. 291.
Beloochees in the army of Xerxes, ii. 340.
Belshazzar, his alliance with Crœsus, ii. 253; his feast, 309.
Belus, temple of, at Babylon, ii. 283; golden statue of, 284; identification of the temple with Birs Nimroud, *ib.*

Bema, i. 5. 232.
Bendamir, river, ii. 345.
Betrothal, Greek, ii. 244.
Bias of Priene, his advice to Crœsus, ii. 252.
Bion, story of, ii. 254.
Birs Nimroud, ii. 384.
Births, Greek, ceremonies at, i. 190; Spartan customs at, 137.
Black broth, i. 137.
Blindman's buff, Greek game of, i. 24.
Boar, monstrous, ravaging Mysia, ii. 258.
Bœotia, i. 341.
Bœotians invade Attica, i. 269; defeated by the Athenians, 270; their heroism at Thermopylæ, 345.
Boreas and Orithcia, legend of, i. 301.
Bosphorus, Cimmerian, ii. 17.
Bosphorus, Thracian, i. 370.
Boustrophedon, i. 246.
Boxing at Olympia, i. 193.
Boys, Greek education of, i. 22; games of, 24; training at Sparta, 138; in Persia, ii. 357.
Branchidæ, temple and oracle of, i. 51, ii. 273.
Branchus, son of Apollo, i. 51.
Brazen race of mankind, ii. 101.
Bridges of Xerxes over the Hellespont, i. 367.
British isles, or Cassiterides, i. 109.
Brotherhoods, religious, rise of, in Greece, i. 238; the Pythagorean, ii. 106; the Orphic, 107.
Bubares, his marriage with a Macedonian princess, i. 354.
Bubastis, or Pasht, identified with Artemis, ii. 146; splendid temple and festival of, *ib.*
Buddha, his reformation in India, ii. 114.
Budini, ii. 39.
Bulis, story of, i. 174.
Bulls worshipped by the Egyptians, ii. 210; winged bulls at Persepolis, 347.
Burning lamps, Egyptian festival of, ii. 143.
Busiris, ii. 144.
Buto, temple of Horus and Pasht at, ii. 144; temple of Leto, *ib.*
Byzantium, i. 370, Herodotus's winter there, ii. 18.

Cadmean victory, i. 107.
Calasires, ii. 150.
Calasiris, Egyptian, ii. 137.
Calchas, ii. 62.
Callirrhoe, fountain of, i. 231.
Callisthenes, ii. 219.
Cambyses the elder, married to Mandane, ii 297; his son Cyrus, *ib.*
Cambyses the younger, stories connected with his invasion of Egypt, ii. 186; his three expeditions, 191; his apparent madness, *ib.*; wounds Apis, 193; his embassy to the Ethiopians, 222; his contract with the Arabs, 231; reign of, 311; his zealous support of the doctrines of Zoroaster, 317; revolt of the Magians, *ib*; story of his brother Smerdis, *ib.*; supposed madness of Cambyses, 318; his last words and death at Ecbatana in Syria, 321; his punishment of an unjust judge, 357.
Camels, sight of, not endured by horses, ii. 268.
Canaanites, or Phœnicians, history of, ii. 232.
Canal of Necho, ii. 179.
Canephoros, i. 4. 255; ii. 86.
Canopus, ii. 135.
Caravan route from Olbia towards the eastern interior, ii. 38.
Carchemish, ii. 180, 181.
Carians, first establishment in Egypt, ii. 179.
Carneia, festival of, i. 178.
Carthage, war with the Italian pirates, i. 106; imprisonment at, 111; projected expedition of Cambyses against, ii. 191.
Cassandane, ii. 187.
Cassandra, ii. 62. 65, 66.
Cassia plant, i. 298.
Cassiterides, i. 12. 109.
Cassotis, i. 223.
Castalian spring, i. 206.
Castes, Egyptian, ii. 149; Persian, 355.
Castor and Pollux, Spartan heroes, ii. 129.
Catiari, ii. 23.
Cats worshipped by the Egyptians, ii. 210; sacred to Pasht, 212.
Caucasus, savage tribes of, ii. 38.
Cauldron made of arrow heads, ii. 35,
Cecrops, i. 233.
Celeus, ii. 89.
Celts, i. 109.
Cenchrea, i. 70.
Centaurs, i. 31.
Cephisia, i. 331.
Cephissus, river, i. 229, 230. 284.
Cerameicus, ii. 85.
Cerberus, i. 66; honey-cake for, ii. 428.
Cestus, the, i. 169.
Chalcidians invade Attica, i. 260; defeated by the Athenians, 270.
Chalcidice, i. 335.
Chaldæan kings, ii. 293.
Chaldæan priests, ii. 283.
Chaos, i. 27; Orphic idea concerning, ii. 111.
Charilaus, i. 134.
Chariot-racing at Olympia, i. 194.
Charon, i. 64; ii. 428.
Chedorlaomer, ii. 290.
Chehil-Menar, ii. 345.
Chemmis, floating island of, ii. 144.
Cheops, great pyramid of, ii. 168; inscription on it, 172.
Chephren, pyramid of, ii. 170.
Chersonesus, or land island, tradition of its colonisation, i. 360.
Chians refuse to sell the Œnyssæ Islands, i. 106; deliver up Pactyas to the Persians, ii. 274.
Chilon, his advice to Hippocrates, i. 249.
Chiton, or tunic, i. 5.
Chlamys, or scarf, i. 6.
Choephorœ, number of the chorus in, ii. 58; representation of, 67.
Chœrilus, satirical dramas of, ii. 59.
Choregus, ii. 54.
Choropœis, i. 176.
Choral singing and dancing, i. 60.
Chorus supplied to the Athenian dramatists, ii. 54; the dithyrambic chorus, 55; chorus in the tragedy and chorus of satyrs, *ib.*; dress of, 56; stationed in the orchestra, 57; number and duties of, 58; chorus of old men in the Agamemnon, 64; of libation bearers in the Choephorœ, 67; of Erinnyes in the Eumenides, 71; of satyrs in the Proteus, 80.

Choruses, Spartan, i. 176.
Chrysis, i. 168.
Chthonian gods and dæmons, ii. 103.
Chytrinda, i. 24.
Cimmerian Bosphorus, ii. 17.
Cimmerians of eastern Europe, ii. 2; expelled by the Scythians, 3; barrow of their kings, *ib.*
Cimon, son of Miltiades, i. 37; dismissed by Sparta, 167; pays the fine imposed on his father, 274; admiral in the Ægean, 278; leader of the Athenian conservative party, 311; his speech at the pnyx, 314.
Cimon, half-brother of Miltiades the elder, his victories at Olympia, i. 362; tomb of Cimon and his mares, 363.
Cinnamon, wonderful method of obtaining it, i. 298.
Cinyps, river, i. 146.
Circe the sorceress, i. 21.
Circumcision practised by the Egyptians, ii. 137.
Cirrha, i. 205.
Cithara, i. 24.
Cithæron, mount, i. 230.
Cleobis and Bion, story of, ii. 254.
Cleomenes, sacrilegious conduct at Argos, i. 120; birth of, 145; succeeds to the throne of Sparta, 146; story of Aristagoras and the brazen map, 147; declines being bribed, 150; his threatening visit to Ægina, 156; his madness and suicide, 157; liberates Athens from the Pisistratids, 258; unsuccessful attempt to make Isagoras tyrant of Athens, 267; renewed attempt defeated by the desertion of his allies at Eleusis, 269.
Cleonæ, i. 115.
Clisthenes, son of Megacles the younger, leader of the Alcmæonid clan, i. 257; leader of the Reform party at Athens, 260; his measure for extending the franchise opposed by Isagoras, *ib.*; carried in the Popular Assembly, 261; details of, 262; driven into exile by Spartan intervention, 267; recalled, 268.
Clytæmnestra, ii. 62. 64; murder of, 70.
Cobon, i. 155, 156.
Cock-fighting, i. 90.
Codrus, i. 233.
Coes, his wise advice to Darius respecting the Danube bridge, ii. 26.
Coining invented by the Lydians, ii. 276.
Colaxais, ii. 23.
Colchians, their presents to Darius Hystaspis, ii. 333.
Confucius, his reformation in China, ii. 114.
Constantinople, i. 370.
Contracts amongst the Scythians, ii. 10; amongst the Arabs, 231.
Copis, i. 176.
Corcyra, massacre at, i. 8.
Corinth, description of, i. 70; ancient history of, 78; story of Cypselus and the Bacchiad assassins, *ib.*; story of Periander the tyrant and his son Lycophron, 80; commercial prosperity of, 81; deserts Sparta at Eleusis, 269; refuses to assist in restoring the Pisistratids, 272.
Corobius, ii. 131.
Corœbus, i. 182.
Corselet, linen, dedicated by Amasis, i. 59.
Corsica, island of, colonised by the Phocæans, i. 106.
Corybantes, i. 106.
Corys, river, ii. 231.
Cottabos, game of, i. 97.
Cotton trees, i. 297.
Cow, hollow image of, at Sais, ii. 170.
Crathis, river, i. 10.
Crete, island of, ii. 120. 131.
Crimea. See Scythia.
Crius, of Ægina, i. 152. 156.
Crockery-market at Athens, i. 286.
Crocodiles, sacred, ii. 211; description of, 225; mode of catching them, 226.
Crocuses, perfume of, i. 283.
Crœsus, king of Lydia, tests the oracles, i. 209; his votive gifts at Delphi, 210; his advice to Cyrus during the Massagetan expedition, ii. 43; his conquests, 252; advice of Bias, *ib.*; visit of Solon, 253; afflicted by the avenging Nemesis, 256; purifies Adrastus, 257; loss of his son Atys, 258; prepares for a war against Cyrus and the Persians, 260; consults the oracles, 261; story of the present sent by the Spartans, *ib.*; anecdote of Alcmæon, 262; war against Persia, 263; advice of Sandanis, *ib.*; prodigy of serpents, 264; overthrow of the Lydian monarchy, 265; story of Crœsus and his dumb son, 266; Crœsus saved by Apollo, *ib.*; his advice to Cyrus, 268; reproaches the oracle at Delphi, *ib.*; his after life, 269; advises Cyrus to make the Lydians luxurious, 272.
Cronium, mount, i. 179. 185.
Cronos, i. 28; defeated by Zeus, 29; removed from Tartarus to the Islands of the Blessed, ii. 104. 109.
Cronos, or Time, regarded by the Orphics as a person, ii. 111.
Crophi, ii. 220.
Crotona, war with Sybaris, i. 3; physicians of, 12; settlement of Pythagoras there, ii. 106; visited by Persian spies, 337.
Crystal sepulchres, ii. 225.
Curetes, ii. 113.
Cyaxares, reign of, ii. 295; takes Nineveh, 296.
Cybele, enthusiastic worship of, in Cyzicus, ii. 19; rites of, adopted in the Greek worship of Demeter, 88. 106.
Cyclades, i. 68.
Cyclopes, i. 28.
Cyclopian remains at Mycenæ, i. 117.
Cylon, his attempt to obtain the tyranny of Athens, i. 235.
Cymæans, consult the oracle of Branchidæ respecting Pactyas, ii. 273.
Cymbals, ii. 19. 50.
Cyme, ii. 273.
Cynuria, i. 123.
Cypselus, story of, i. 79; becomes tyrant of Corinth, 80.
Cyrene, description of, ii. 127; legends connected with the first establishment of the colony, *ib.*; its inhabitants, 133.
Cyrus, i. 16; defeats Crœsus and captures Sardis, ii. 265; orders Crœsus to be placed on a pile, 266; pardons him, 267; follows his advice, 268. 273; delivered up as an infant to Harpagus to be put to death, ii. 297; story of his preservation, 229; discovery of his birth, 300; incited by Harpagus to revolt, 302; induces the Persians

to join him, 303; defeats Astyages, and establishes the Medo-Persian empire, 304; conquest of Lydia and Asiatic Greece, 306; story of the piper and the fishes, 307; taunt at Greek markets, *ib.*; capture of Babylon, 309; edict of Cyrus, 311; his death, *ib.*; religious character of, 316, 317; his tomb at Pasargada, 359; edict of, renewed by Darius Hystaspis, 362; by Artaxerxes, 363.
Cyrus, river, ii. 345.
Cyzicus, island of, ii. 19.

Dædalus, i. 85.
Danae, i. 118.
Dances, Spartan, i. 176, 177; choral, generally, ii. 55. 58.
Daniel, his influence on the heathen world, ii. 114; interprets the writing on the wall, 310.
Danube, supposed course of, ii. 227.
Darics, golden, i. 291.
Darius Hystaspis, i. 16; story of Syloson and the scarlet cloak, 55; demands earth and water of the Greeks, 150; treatment of his heralds, 151; advocated the establishment of a monarchy in Persia, 325; his invasion of Scythia, ii. 25; his bridge of boats over the Danube, ii. 26; builds eight forts in Scythia, 27; his message to Idanthyrsus, *ib.*; failure of the expedition, 29; the retreat, 30; passage of the Danube, 33; opened the sepulchre of Nitocris, 286; joins the conspiracy of the Seven, ii. 325. 328; obtains the throne of Persia, 329; introduces several religious reforms, *ib.*; revolt of Babylon, 330; captured through the self-sacrificing heroism of Zopyrus, 331; conquests of Darius, 333; story of his dislocated ankle and the surgeon of Crotona, 334; despatches spies to European Greece, 337; prepares for an expedition, 338; his sudden death, 339; ordered the crucifixion of an unjust judge, 357.
David, the shepherd king of Israel, ii. 380.
Debt abhorred by the Persians, ii. 357.
Deioces, a Median judge, ii. 293; establishes himself on the throne of Media, 291.
Delos, the birth-place of Apollo, i 68; its ancient celebrity, 69; the centre and treasury of the Athenian confederacy, 279.
Delphi, oracle concerning Tegea, i. 126; concerning the bones of Orestes, 127, 128; address to Lycurgus, 134; corrupted by Cleomenes, 155; oracle concerning the unjust Spartan, 160; town of, 205; Herodotus's visit, 206; wonders of Delphi, 207; temple of Apollo, 208; treasures of, 209; trial of the oracle by Crœsus, *ib.*; history of the oracle, 222; its character, 224; consulted by Captain Phylarchus, 226; destruction of the temple by fire, 256; rebuilt by the Alcmæonids, 257; corruption of the oracle, *ib.*; oracle concerning Sparta and the Persians, 344; representation of the temple in the play of the Eumenides, ii. 71; oracles delivered to Battus, 132, 133; to Crœsus, 262.
Delta, plain of, ii. 136; changes effected by the inundations of the Nile, *ib.*; geography of, 148.
Deluge, the, ii. 365.
Demaratus, story of his quarrel with Cleomenes, i. 150; story of his doubtful birth, 152; legend concerning his mother, 153; his deposition from the throne of Sparta, 154; deserts to Darius, 156; apprises the Spartans of the projected invasion of Greece, 158; refuses to join Cleomenes at Eleusis, 269; his advice to Xerxes, ii. 339.
Demes of Attica, i. 261.
Demeter, i. 30; altar of Demeter Chamyne, 191; magnificent temple of Demeter at Eleusis, ii. 88; legend of Demeter and Persephone, *ib*; idea of Demeter as the goddess of the corn-field, 100; the Eleusinian Demeter a Chthonian deity, 101; orgies of, 105; connexion of her worship with that of Cybele, 106; her identity with Isis, 205.
Democedes, the surgeon of Crotona, cures the dislocated ankle of Darius, ii. 335; his previous life, 336; cures Atossa, *ib.*; sent with some Persian spies to Greece, 337; escapes to Crotona, *ib.*; affianced to the daughter of Milo, 338.
Democritus, ii. 219.
Demophon, ii. 90.
Devs, or evil genii, ii. 313.
Diagoras, i. 199.
Diasia, i. 236.
Dicasteries, or jury courts, i. 264; sitting of a dicastery, 307.
Dice and draughts, i. 89.
Didyma, i. 51.
Diocles, ii. 92.
Dionysius of Syracuse, his objection to black broth, i. 137.
Dionysus, i. 30; orgies of, at Olbia, ii. 21; at Athens, 48; festival of the great Dionysia, *ib.*; origin of the drama, 54; idea of Dionysus as god of the vineyard, 100; mysterious worship of, 105, 106; Dionysus Zagreus, a Chthonian deity, worshipped by the Orphics, 100; Orphic ideas concerning, 112; legend of, *ib.*; his resemblance to Osiris, 205; antiquity of, 208; represented in Greek sculpture, 417; stone theatre of, i. 302; its structure and arrangement, ii. 56; ancient altar, 58.
Diphilus, i. 288.
Discus, i. 25.
Dithyrambs, solemn and gloomy, ii. 48; mirthful and joyous, 49; the origin of Greek tragedy, 54.
Diviners, Scythian, ii. 11; Median, ii. 297.
Dodecarthy, Egyptian, establishment of, ii. 178.
Dodona, oracle of Zeus at, legend concerning, ii. 205.
Dogs worshipped by the Egyptians, ii. 210; Indian dogs, 280; considered sacred by the Persians, 359.
Doloncians, i. 360.
Dorians of Asia Minor, i. 16; Dorian invasion of the Peloponnesus, 131.
Dorieus, his adventures, i. 146.
Draco, his severe legislation at Athens, i. 235.
Drama, ancient, origin and character of. See Theatre.
Draughts and dice, i. 89.
Dryads, i. 21.
Dryo, mother of Herodotus, i. 18; parting advice, 48; return of Herodotus, ii. 236; her anxiety concerning her son's marriage, 239; her death, 249.

Drums, ii. 19. 50.
Dye, Laconian, i. 12.
Dysorum, mount, i. 235.

Earth, supposed by the Greeks to surround the river Ocean, i. 147; wonderful products of its extremities, 297.
Ecbatana, in Media, description of, ii. 294.
Ecbatana, in Syria, ii. 319.
Eccyclema, its employment in the Greek theatre, ii. 57. 66. 70.
Echidna, i. 115; legend of, ii. 24.
Edomites, ii. 230.
Education, Greek, i. 22; Spartan, 137; Persian, ii. 357.
Ection, i. 78.
Egg, the mundane, ii. 111.
Egypt, ancient history of, ii. 159; arrival of Manetho, *ib.*; stories of the priests of Pthah, 160; feat of Nitocris, 161; conquests of Sesostris, *ib.*; extraordinary story of the treasure chamber of Rampsinitus, 162; stories of the pyramid kings, 166; account of the shepherd kings, 167; Egypt, land and people of, 135; extraordinary impressions produced on Herodotus by the Egyptians, 137; complexion, dress, manners, &c., *ib.*; troubled state of the country at the time of Herodotus's visit, 138; ancient exclusiveness of the Egyptians, 140; temples, 141; skulls, 146; geography of the Delta, 148; Egyptian castes, 149; mode of living, 152; art of medicine, *ib.*; strange custom at convivial parties, *ib.*; ancient dirge, 153; mournings for the dead, 154; embalming, *ib.*; writing, 155; religion, 200; worship of animals, 210; mode of sacrifice, 214; productions of Egypt, 351; Cheops, and description of his pyramid, 168; pyramids of Chephren and Mycerinus, 170; story of Mycerinus's daughter, *ib.*; singular oracle concerning his death, 171; history of the kings of Egypt connected with the kings of Judah and Israel, 175; Shishak, *ib.*; story of Sabacon of the dynasty of Tirhakah, 176; the priest-king Sethon, *ib.*; invasion of Sennacherib, 177; connexions with the court of Hezekiah, *ib.*; story of the government of twelve kings, 178; Psammetichus, 179; Pharaoh Necho, *ib.*; circumnavigation of Africa, *ib.*; defeat and death of king Josiah, 180; Necho defeated by Nebuchadnezzar, 181; reign of Apries, the Pharaoh Hophra of Scripture, 182; merry reign of Amasis, 183; traditionary accounts of the causes of the Persian invasion, 186; story of Phanes, 188; conquest of Egypt by Cambyses, 189; after-history, 194; revolt of, in the reign of Darius, 338; repressed by Xerxes, 339; revolt under Inarus, i. 283; request the assistance of Athens, 314.
Eion, i. 357.
Electra, ii. 67.
Elephantine, fishermen of, sent by Cambyses as envoys to the Macrobian Ethiopians, ii. 223; mode of catching the crocodile, 226.
Eleusis, i. 269; mysteries of, Herodotus's initiation in, ii. 87; the greater and lesser Eleusinia, *ib.*; magnificent temple of Demeter, 88; legend of Demeter and Persephone, *ib.*; solemnities, 93; influence of the mysteries, 104; Pindar's observation concerning them, *ib.*
Elis, i. 114; sacred character of during the Olympic games, 183; settlements of the Minyans, ii. 30.
Elysian Fields, ii. 102.
Embalming, Egyptian, ii. 154.
Empusa, story of, i. 20.
Enarees, Scythian, ii. 11.
Enchorial writing of the Egyptians, ii. 155.
Endymion, i. 185; altar of, 191.
Enneacrunos, i. 285; description of, 301.
Eos, i. 188.
Ephebi, the, i. 25.
Ephetæ, courts of, i. 247.
Ephialtes, treachery of, i. 342.
Ephors, i. 134.
Epimenides of Crete, the Purifier, i. 238; heals the disorders at Athens, 239, ii. 210.
Epistates, i. 263. 293.
Epostrakismos, i. 24.
Erasinus, river, i. 120.
Erebus, i. 27.
Erechtheus, i. 233.
Erechtheum, temple of, i. 303; chapels of Erechtheus and Athena the Protectress, 304; the salt spring and sacred olive, *ib.*; its restoration, ii. 422.
Eretria, i. 253.
Erinnyes, i. 28. ii. 61; their appearance to Orestes, ii. 71; frightful figures, 72; their appearance throughout the play of the Eumenides, 73; sanctuary of, 78.
Eros, or Love, i. 27; Orphic idea concerning, ii. 111; progenitor of the gods, 112.
Erytheia, ii. 23.
Esdraelon, ii. 180.
Esther, story of, ii. 368.
Etearchus, king of Ammonium, his story concerning the Nasamonian expedition, ii. 227.
Etearchus, king of Axus, in Crete, ii. 131.
Etesian winds, i. 15. ii. 117. 121; supposed to cause the overflow of the Nile, ii. 217.
Ethbaal, ii. 232.
Ethiopians in the extreme south, i. 298; conquest of Egypt, ii. 176; disastrous expedition of Cambyses against the Macrobian Ethiopians, 191; ruins of Ethiopia, 220; geography of, 221; embassy of Cambyses, 222; presents to Darius, 334; appearance in the army of Xerxes, 340; productions of Ethiopia, 351.
Etiquette, system of, established by Deioces, ii. 295.
Euagoras, i. 363.
Eubœa, i. 253. 341.
Eumenides, number of the chorus in, ii. 58; performance of, 71.
Eumolpus, ii. 92.
Eumolpids, sacred family of, ii. 88.
Eupalinus, i. 58.
Eupatrids, or nobles, oligarchy of, at Athens, i. 235.
Eupolis, the money-changer at Athens, Herodotus's adventure with, i. 290; his reappearance, ii. 392.
Euphorion, the proxenus at Athens, i. 294; obtains the discharge of Herodotus from the prytanes, 295; his character, 296; hospitality to Herodotus, 297; shows him the wonders of Athens, 300; describes the

state of parties at Athens, 310; entertainment of Herodotus during the great Dionysia, ii. 49. 52; his designs respecting his daughter and Herodotus, 84; accompanies Herodotus to see the grand procession to the Acropolis, 85; discourse with Captain Phylarchus concerning the melancholy of Herodotus, 118; his letter, 241; his death, 415.
Euphrates, river, ii. 278; mounded in by Semiramis, 279; bridged by Nitocris, 283.
Euphrosyne, ii. 50. 120. 241. 415.
Euripus, strait of, i. 270. 341.
Eurakylon, ii. 123.
Eurotas, river, i. 130.
Eurydice, legend of, 108.
Eurystheus, i. 115. 133; Cyclopean hall of, at Mycenæ, 117.
Evangelidæ, i. 52.
Exampæus, huge cauldron of arrow heads there, ii. 35.
Executions, night, at Sparta, ii. 129.
Expiatory rites amongst the Greeks, ii. 75, 76. 257, 258.
Ezekiel, denounces Egyptian idolatry, ii. 213; notices of Tyre, 233.
Ezra, governor of Judea, ii. 231. 363.

Fair Havens, ii. 121.
Festivals, at Delos, i. 69; the Nemea, 116; the Hyacinthia, 175; the Gymnopædia, 176; the Carneia, 178; the Olympian, 179; the Dionysia, ii. 48; the Panathenæa, 81; the Lampadephoria, 82; festival of the Burning Lamps, 143; festival of Bubastis or Pasht, 146.
Fire, Egyptian and Persian belief concerning, ii. 19; worshipped by the Magians, 313; by the modern Parsees, 314.
Fiery Mountains, i. 109.
Fish-market at Athens, i. 287.
Flutes, ii. 50.
Flute girls, i. 95.
Foot-races at Olympia, i. 191.
Frankincense trees guarded by winged serpents, i. 298.
Funeral ceremonies of the Thracians, i. 358; of the Scythians, ii. 12; of the Egyptians, 154; of the Magians, 359; of the Greeks, 428.
Furies. See Erinnyes.
Furs, ancient trade in, ii. 38.

Gades, i. 12.
Games invented by the Lydians, ii. 276.
Games, Olympic, i. 179.
Gaza, ii. 383.
Gebeleizis, i. 371.
Gelonus, Greek settlement of, ii. 24. 39.
Gens, or family, i. 234.
Geryon, ii. 23.
Getæ, their belief in the immortality of the soul, i. 370; account of their deity Zalmoxis, 371.
Gillus, ii. 338.
Gizeh, pyramids of, ii. 159.
Glaucus and Scylla, story of, i. 21.
Glaucus of Samos, i. 209.
Glaucus, the unjust Spartan, story of, i. 159.
Glaucus, the image merchant, i. 72; appearance of his warehouse, 73; tries to cheat the gods, 91; death of, ii. 415.
Goat-footed people, ii. 46.
Gobryas, ii. 326. 328.
Golden race of mankind, ii. 100.
Gold-hunters of India, i. 298.
Gold, ancient trade in, ii. 38.
Gold mines at Thasos, i. 359.
Golden Fleece, legend of, i. 365.
Golden Fleece, nautical tavern of, at Corinth, i. 101.
Gorgo, wife of Leonidas, anecdote of, i. 150. 157; story of her sagacity, 158.
Gorgons, i. 30.
Graces, i. 30.
Grammata, i. 22.
Great mother. See Cybele.
Greece, mode of sacrificing amongst the Greeks, i. 4; houses and dress, 5; nursery, 40; school and gymnasium, 22; outline of the mythology, 25; literature, 41; meals, 56; prose writers, 61; philosophers and logographers, *ib.*; statuary, 83; painting, 86; gymnastics, 180; love of beauty, *ib.*; different races of, 181; arrangement of the Greek temple, 306; purifying and expiatory rites, ii. 75 258; changes in the religious ideas of the Greeks between the times of Hesiod and Herodotus, 98; review of the orthodox faith as laid down by Hesiod, 99; Hesiodic ideas of the origin of the human race, 100; Hesiodic ideas concerning a future state, 102; changes produced by the mysteries, 103; orgies of Dionysus and Cybele, 105; teaching of Pythagoras, 106; Orphic societies, 107; loftier views of death, 109; Orphic theogony, 111; difference between the Hesiodic and Orphic ideas, 112; Greek legends of heroes compared with the Egyptian, 208; Greek marriages, i. 139, ii. 238; ceremony of betrothal, 244; marriage ceremonies, 246; conquest of Greece projected by Darius, 334; shores of, surveyed by Persian spies, 337; representations of the Greek gods, 416; funeral ceremonies, 428; classification of the Greek divinities, 431. See also Festivals, Mysteries, Theatre, Athens, Sparta, Corinth, &c.
Griffins, i. 299, ii. 46.
Grinus, ii. 130.
Guanes, i. 350.
Gygæa, her marriage with Bubares, i. 354.
Gymnasium, i. 5. 24.
Gymnastics, Greek, character of, i. 180.
Gymnopædia, festival of, i. 176.
Gynæconitis, i. 5.
Gyndes, river, separated by Cyrus into 360 channels, ii. 308.

Hades, Homer's ideas of, ii. 102; the Egyptian, 203. See Pluto.
Halicarnassus, city of, i. 15; condition under the Persian sway, 18; history of, 34; Herodotus's return, ii. 236; state of politics, 237; Herodotus's last return, 384; state under Lygdamis, 386; a revolution, 394; departure of Herodotus for ever, 397.
Haman, story of, ii. 370; his death, 376.
Hamath, ii. 181. 319.
Harmodius, i. 255.
Harpagus commissioned by Astyages to slay the infant Cyrus, ii. 297; delivers the infant to Mitradates, 298; terrible revenge of Astyages, 301; incites Cyrus to revolt, 302; reduces the Greek cities in Asia Minor, 307.

Harpies, i. 31.
Hatach, ii. 372.
Havan, ii. 350.
Hebe, i. 30.
Hebrews, origin and religion of, ii. 365; captivity of, 366; destruction of, plotted by Haman, 371.
Hecate, ii. 89.
Hecatæus, i. 63; his map, 147; presumption in claiming a divine origin, ii. 209; his theory concerning the Nile, 217; ridiculed by Herodotus, 218.
Hegesipyle, the Thracian wife of Miltiades, i. 364.
Helen carried of by Paris, i. 131, ii. 62.
Helen, temple of, i. 153; legend of her appearance to a deformed infant, *ib.*
Heliadæ, tears of, changed to amber, i. 110.
Heliopolis, or On, ii. 147; temple of the Sun, 148; the Phœnix, *ib.*; historical learning of the Heliopolitans, *ib.*
Helios, the sun-god, i. 27. 30. 62, ii. 89; temple of, at Heliopolis, 147, 148. See Sun.
Hellanicus, i. 64.
Hellanodicæ, i. 189, 191.
Hellas. See Greece.
Helle, sepulchre of, i. 365; legend connected with it, *ib.*
Hellenium, ii. 140.
Hellespont, i. 360; bridges of Xerxes, 397.
Helots, i. 132. 136; their duties at the Syssitia, 164; their condition, 165; rebellion, 166.
Hemp-seed, burnt, used for vapour baths by the Scythians, ii. 14.
Hephæstus, i. 30; torch-race in honour of, ii. 83; the Egyptian (see Pthah).
Hera, i. 20. 30; magnificent temple of, at Samos, 58; her revenge on Leto, 68; her temple near Argos, 118; portentous omen, 122; her jealousy of Dionysus Zagreus, ii. 113; represented in sculpture, 416.
Heracleids, their invasion of the Peloponnesus, i. 127. 131.
Heracles erects the pillars of Gibraltar, i. 109; story of the Nemean lion, 115; footprint of, ii. 5; descent of the Scythians from, 23; antiquity of the god, 208; distinction between Heracles the god, and Heracles the hero, 209; fresh doubts concerning, 229; ancient temple of the Phœnician Heracles at Tyre, 235; representation of, in Greek sculpture, 417.
Heraclitus, i. 61.
Heralds, Persian, require earth and water from the Greeks, i. 151; story of the atonement of, 173.
Hercyna, i. 218.
Herdsmen, Egyptian caste of, ii. 151.
Hermæ figures, ii. 49.
Hermes, leader of the dead, ii. 68; brings Persephone from Pluto, 91; Egyptian temple of, 146.
Hermes, street of, at Athens, i. 229.
Hermon, mount, ii. 378.
Hermotybies, ii. 150.
Hero and Leander, i. 367.
Herodotus joins the colonists proceeding to Thurium, i. 2; his conversation with a Samian skipper, 11; birth of, 15. 18; amusements in the nursery, 20; nursery stories, *ib.*; education in the school and gymnasium, 22; faulty arithmetic, 23; early religious belief, 26; early affianced to Phædra, 33; character as a young man, 39; projects an epic poem, 40; story of the pædagogue and Nile paper, 41; criticisms of Lyxes, 46; receives the parting advice of Lyxes and Dryo, 48; voyage to Samos, 50; entertained by Theodorus, and gazes on the wonders of Samos, 57; studies at Samos, 65; voyage across the Ægean, 67; visits Delos, 68; lands at Cenchrea and proceeds to Corinth, 70; entertained by Glaucus, 75; strolls through Corinth, 82; visits the gallery of Glaucus, 87; plays at dice with Polydorus, 88; love affairs, 89; becomes fashionable and gay, 90; banquet and symposium in the house of Nicias, 92; quits the house of Glaucus, 99; sojourns at the Golden Fleece, 100; leaves Corinth for Argos, 114; visits Mycenæ, 117; resides at Argos, 118; proceeds towards Sparta, 124; entertained in the Arcadian town of Tegea, 125; enters Sparta, 162; joins the public mess, 163; admiration for Chrysis, 168; pugilistic encounter, 169; proceeds to the Olympic games, 184; moonlight view of Olympia, 185; meeting with Phylarchus, 201; visits the pitch wells at Zacynthus, 204; visits Delphi, 206; proceeds to Lebadea, 214; returns to Delphi, 222; proceeds to Athens, and lands at the Piræus, 281; an Athenian barber, 282; first impressions of Athens, 285; the fish-market, 287; adventure with Eupolis the money-changer, 290; taken before the prytanes, 292; relieved by Euphorion the proxenus, 294; disputation with a sophist, 299; walk with Euphorion through Athens, 300; his opinion of Athens, 310; attends the popular assembly at the pnyx, 312; speech of Cimon, 314; speech of Pericles, 317; disgusted with the Athenian orators, 321; ancient political pamphlet, 323; pursuits and amusements at Athens, 328; excursion to Marathon, 331; meditations on the battle-field, 332; prepares for a voyage to Scythia, 334; trade in gods, 337; religious views, 338; embarkation at the Piræus, 341; visit to Thermopylæ, *ib.*; visits Xerxes's Canal at Athos, 349; Macedonia, 350; Thrace, 356; short stay at Chersonesus and the Hellespont, 365; residence at Olbia in Scythia, ii. 5; impression of the Scythians, 6; acquaintance with Timnes, 7; winters at Byzantium, accompanied by Timnes, 16, 17; returns to Athens in time for the great Dionysia, 48; falls in love, 50; Athenian drama, 53; his dramatic studies, 58; joins the party of Euphorion to witness the representation of Æschylus's trilogy of the Oresteia, 59; performance of the Oresteia, 63; effect upon Herodotus, 80; witnesses the festivities of the great Panathenæa, 81; the grand procession to the Acropolis, 85; initiation into the Eleusinian mysteries, 87. 93; his melancholy, 116; prepares for a voyage to Egypt, 117; progress of his love affair, 119; embarkation, 120; voyage to Crete 121; a storm, 123; difficulty connected with the wine skins, 124; Herodotus's appearance as a Chthonian deity, 126; stay at Appollonia and Cyrene, *ib.*; voyage to Egypt, 135; first impressions of the Egyptians, 137; residence at Naucratis, 140; Sais, *ib.*; Buto, 144; Busiris, *ib.*;

Papremis, *ib.*; Bubastis, 146; Heliopolis, 147; proceeds to Memphis, 156; information obtained from the priests of Pthah, 160; proceeds to Thebes, 195; his investigations into the Egyptian religion, 200; visits the temple and oracle at Dodona, 206; his fixed opinions respecting the gods, 207; proceeds to Elephantine, 216; inquiries concerning the sources and inundations of the Nile, *ib.*; absurd story of the registrar at Sais, 220; his theory concerning the Nile and the Ister, 227; returns to Memphis, 228; doubts concerning the antiquity of Heracles, 229; proceeds to Tyre, 230; visits the temple of the Phœnician Heracles, 235; return to Halicarnassus, 236; projected marriage, 238; anxiety of Dryo, 239; awful discovery, 241; his betrothal, 245; his marriage, 247; prepares for a journey to Susa, 250; proceeds to Sardis, 251; visits Babylon, 278; reaches Susa, 344; proceeds to Persepolis, 345; the gifts of the ambassadors on the birthday of Artaxerxes, 350; the royal banquet, 352; presented with a Median dress, 353; admitted to an audience with Artaxerxes, *ib.*; visits Pasargada, 359; interviews with Nehemiah, 362; account of the Hebrew people and their religion, 364; accompanies Nehemiah to Jerusalem, 376; condition of the city, 379; his meditations on the Mount of Olives, 381; return to Halicarnassus, 383; fears respecting the avenging Nemesis, 384; sorrow and affliction, 385; return to political life, 388; visit to Lygdamis, 389; meeting with Eupolis, 390; a revolution, 394; attempt at assassination, 396; voluntary exile, 397; his retirement at Thurium, 398; his meditations upon the past, 399; compiles his history of the Persian war, 400; its epic character, 401; scope and contents, 402; a second marriage, 406; pays a last visit to Athens, 411; Athens in all her glory, 413; hospitality of old Captain Phylarchus, 414; *marvellous representations of the gods of Hellas, 416; return to Thurium*, 424; Egyptian linens and Babylonian cottons, 425; evening readings, *ib.*; character of Herodotus's listeners, 426; old age and its infirmities, 427; death, 428; funeral ceremonies, *ib*; funeral oration, 429.

Herodotus, son of Basilides, i. 33. 39.

Heroic race of mankind, ii. 101.

Hesiod, theogony and mythology of, i. 28; works of, 41. 43; review of the orthodox faith as laid down by him, ii. 99; his ideas concerning the origin of the human race, 100; enlarges the skeleton theogony of Homer, 102; his ideas concerning a future state, *ib.*; modification of his ideas in the time of Herodotus, 108. 109; difference between the Hesiodic and the Orphic ideas, 111.

Hestia, i. 30.

Hezekiah, invasion of Sennacherib, ii. 177; reproved by Isaiah, 292.

Hieratic writing of the Egyptians, ii. 155.

Hieroglyphics, Egyptian, ii. 155.

Himation, or cloak, i. 6.

Hinnom, valley of, ii. 381.

Hipparchus, assassination of, i. 255.

Hippias succeeds his father Pisistratus as tyrant of Athens, i. 254; assassination of his brother Hipparchus, 259; establishes a system of terrorism, 256; expelled from Athens, 258; invited to Sparta, 271; unsuccessful attempt of the Spartans to restore him to Athens, *ib.*; proceeds to Sardis and intrigues with the Persian satrap, 272; hired assassins to put Cimon to death, 363.

Hippocrates, father of Pisistratus, prodigy concerning, i. 248.

Hippodrome at Olympia, i. 195.

Hippopotamus, ii. 211.

Hiram, king of Tyre, ii. 232.

Histiæus advises the Ionians to preserve the bridge over the Danube, ii. 31.

Homer, i. 41; works of, 43; Iliad and Odyssey collected by the Pisistratids, 45; enlargement of his theogony by Hesiod, ii. 102.

Homicide, ancient Greek law concerning, ii. 105.

Honeymoons at Sparta, i. 142.

Hophra. See Apries.

Horse-racing at Olympia, i. 194.

Houses, Greek, i. 5.

Horns, ii. 19.

Horus, the Egyptian Apollo, temple of, at Buto, ii. 144; concealed by Leto from Typhon, *ib.*; war with Typhon, 203, 204.

Hundred columns, hall of, at Persepolis, ii. 353.

Hyacinthia, festival of, i. 175.

Hyampolis, i. 212.

Hydarnes, i. 174. 343.

Hyksos, account of, ii. 167.

Hylas, i. 42.

Hyllus, i. 127.

Hymenæos, i. 42, ii. 247.

Hymettus, mount, i. 230.

Hyperboreans of the arctic circle, ii. 46; loved by Apollo, 110; tombs of, at Delos, i. 70.

Hyrcæades, ii. 266.

Iambe, ii. 90. 93. 96.

Iapygia, ii. 338.

Ibis, sacred to Thoth, ii. 212.

Idanthyrsus, king of Scythia, his reply to Darius, ii. 27.

Idolatry, ancient, sects of, ii. 312; the Sabæan, or worship of images, *ib.*; the Magian, or worship of fire, 313; doctrines of Zoroaster, *ib.*

Idolatry, origin of, ii. 365.

Idumæans, ii. 230.

Ilissus, river, i. 230. 300.

Ilithyia, goddess of child-birth, i. 19.

Illyria, i. 351.

Images of the gods first made in Egypt, ii. 200.

Immortality of the soul, Thracian belief in, i. 370, 371; taught in the Greek mysteries, ii. 96. 102. 104; Egyptian ideas concerning, 203; Persian belief in the resurrection of the dead, 361.

Immortals, the Persian, i. 343; ii. 341.

Inarus, revolt of, i. 314; ii. 138; capitulates, 139. 156. 194. 339.

India, its cotton, gold, and ants, i. 297.

Indians, i. 297; in the army of Xerxes, ii. 340.

Indian dogs, ii. 280.

Ino, i. 365.

Interpreters, Egyptian caste of, ii, 151.
Io, legend of, i. 118.
Ion, son of Apollo, i. 234.
Ionian Sea, i. 1.
Ionians, revolt of, i. 16; descent, 234; construct a bridge over the Danube for Darius, ii. 26; promise the Scythians to destroy it, 28; decide upon preserving it, 31; first established in Egypt, 217.
Ionian philosophers, their theories concerning the Nile, ii. 217.
Iphigenia, human sacrifices to, amongst the Tauri, ii. 15; sacrifice of, 62. 64.
Iren, the Spartan, i. 138.
Iris, i. 30. 283.
Iron money, i. 136.
Iron race of mankind, ii. 101.
Isagoras, leader of the conservative party at Athens, i. 260; opposes the reform bill of Clisthenes, *ib.*; invites the intervention of Sparta, 267; defeated by a popular revolution, 268.
Isaiah, his reply to the boasts of Sennacherib, ii. 177; his denunciations against Egypt, 213; notice of Tyre, 233; reproves Hezekiah, 293; his prophetical address to Cyrus, 310.
Isis, temple of, at Busiris, ii. 144; plays at dice in Hades, 166; worship of, 202; her identity with Demeter, 205.
Islands of the Blessed ii. 102. 104. 109.
Issedones, curious custom of cooking and eating their deceased parents, ii. 41.
Italy, Greek colony established on the southern shores of, i. 1.
Ithome, hill of, i. 166.
Itonian gate, i. 300.
Ivory employed in statuary, i. 84.
Izeds, or evil genii, ii. 313.

Jabbok, river, ii. 379.
Jaspers, ii. 351.
Jaxartes, river, ii. 43.
Jehoahaz, ii. 181.
Jehoshaphat, valley of, ii. 381.
Jehovah, ii. 364.
Jemshid, ii. 296; golden age of, 315; throne of, 345.
Jerusalem, ii. 181; her condition in the time of Nehemiah, 379; Herodotus's visit, *ib.*; description of, 380; meditations of Herodotus, 381; meditations of Nehemiah, 382.
Jews, ii. 231. See Hebrews.
Jezebel, ii. 232.
Jezreel, ii. 180.
Jonah, mission of, its effect on the heathen world, ii. 114; account of, 291.
Jordan, river, ii. 378.
Joshua, ii. 362.
Josiah defeated by Necho at Esdraelon, ii. 180.
Jyrcæ, ii. 40.

Karnac, ii. 199.
Kidron, ii. 381.
Kneph, the Egyptian, ii. 202.

Labda, story of, i. 78.
Labyrinth, in Egypt, description of, ii. 197; recently exhumed, 198.
Lacedæmon. See Sparta.
Laconia, i. 114.
Ladice, ii. 185.
Laius, tomb of, i. 216.
Lampadephoria, or torch-race, ii. 82.
Lamiæ, stories of, i. 20.
Lasus, ii. 111.
Laurium, silver mines of, i. 230. 275.
Leander, i. 367.
Learchus, i. 365.
Lebadea, Herodotus's visit to, i. 215; cave and oracle of Trophonius, *ib.*
Lebæa, i. 351.
Lebanon, mount, ii. 232. 378.
Lechæum, i. 70.
Ledanum, i. 298.
Lemnos, Minyans driven out by the Pelasgians, ii. 128; origin of the term Lemnian deeds, *ib.*
Leonidas, birth of, i. 146; his marriage, 157; his heroism at Thermopylæ, 342.
Leotychides obtains the deposition of Demaratus, i. 154; accused by the Æginetans, 158; proceeds to Athens, 159; his exile and death, 161.
Lepers expelled from towns by the Persians, ii. 359.
Lethe, fountain of, i. 219.
Leto, temple of, at Buto, ii. 144; her oracle to Mycerinus, 171.
Leto and Zeus, story of, i. 68.
Levanter, ii. 123.
Libation bearers, chorus of, ii. 67.
Libnah, siege of, by Sennacherib, ii. 177.
Libya, early colonisation of, by the Greeks, ii. 130.
Libyan mountains, ii. 136.
Libyans in the army of Xerxes, ii. 340.
Lichas discovers the bones of Orestes, i. 128.
Linen, Egyptian trade in, ii. 117.
Linus, ancient song of, i. 42, ii. 153.
Lions, gate of, at Mycenæ, i. 117.
Lion, Nemean, story of, i. 115.
Lipoxais, ancestor of the Auchatæ Scythians, ii. 23.
Lipsydrium, i. 256.
Locris, i. 341.
Long Rocks, i. 305.
Lotus used as food by the Egyptian marshmen, ii. 152.
Luxor, ii. 199.
Lycabettus, mount, i. 230.
Lycophron, son of Periander, story of, i. 30.
Lycurgus, life of, i. 133; his legislation and institutions at Sparta, 134.
Lycurgus, leader of the Attic lowlanders, i. 249.
Lydia, i. 76; history of, ii. 252; manners and customs of the Lydians, 275; Lydian migration to Italy, 276.
Lygdamis, grandson of Artemisia, i. 38, ii. 237; succeeds to the tyranny of Halicarnassus, 386; his oppression, *ib.*; his character, 389; interview with Herodotus, 390; a revolution, 394; abdication and exile, 395.
Lygdamis, father of Artemisia, tyrant of Halicarnassus, i. 34.
Lygdamis, tyrant of Naxos, i. 253.
Lying abhorred by the Persians, ii. 357.
Lysias, the orator, i. 3.
Lyxes, father of Herodotus, i. 18; his ambition for his son, 33. 39; criticisms on Herodotus's epic, 46; his advice to Herodotus, 48; his letter, 67; his political

pamphlet, 327; return of Herodotus, ii. 236; proposes his marriage, 238; overrules Herodotus's objection, 240; his ambitious schemes, 249; his death, 385; his writings, 387.

Macedonia, geography of, i. 335; ancient history of, 349; legend of the Temenids of the Macedonian monarchy, 352.
Macrobian Ethiopians, Cambyses's disastrous expedition against, ii. 191; embassy to, 222.
Madyes, king of the Scythians, ii. 3.
Mæandrius, tyrant of Samos, i. 54.
Magdolus, ii. 181.
Magian idolatry, or worship of the sun under the form of fire, ii. 313; principles of good and evil, light and darkness, *ib.*; doctrines of Zoroaster, *ib.*; character of the Magians as a priest caste, 315; heresies of, *ib.*
Magian revolt, ii. 317.
Magian sacrifices, mode of, ii. 349.
Magian singers, ii. 349.
Magians, slaughter of, ii. 328.
Mandane married to Cambyses, ii. 297; her son Cyrus, *ib.*
Mandrocles, his picture of Darius, i. 58; his bridge over the Hellespont, ii. 25.
Malian gulf, i. 341.
Maneros, ancient song of, ii. 153; its supposed origin, *ib.*
Manetho, annals of, ii. 159.
Maps, ancient, i. 147; map of Aristagoras, *ib.*; nautical, ii. 121.
Marathon, battle of, i. 17. 253. 273; Herodotus's visit to the site, 331.
Mardonius, destruction of his fleet off Athos, i. 348.
Marjoram, i. 283.
Market at Athens, i. 286.
Markets unknown to the Persians, ii. 307.
Marriages, Greek, i. 139. 142, ii. 238, 246; Thracian, i. 357; Lydian, ii. 275; marriage auctions at Babylon, 286.
Masistes, story of, ii. 357.
Masks employed in the ancient drama, ii. 56.
Massagetæ expel the Scythians from Asia, ii. 2; curious customs of, 42. expedition of Cyrus against them, 43; stratagem for defeating them, 44; his own defeat and death, 45.
Mazares, ii. 273; bribes the Chians to deliver up Pactyas, 274.
Meals, Greek, i. 56, *note.*
Media invaded by the Scythians, ii. 4; ally with the Chaldee Babylonians, and take the city of Nineveh, *ib.*; history of, 293; reign of Deioces, 294; Phraortes, 295; Cyaxares, *ib.*; Astyages, 296; empire overthrown by Cyrus and the Persians, 304.
Median etiquette, ii. 295.
Median divines, ii. 297; slain by Astyages, 304.
Medo-Persian empire established by Cyrus, ii. 305. See Persians.
Medicine, art of, amongst the Egyptians, ii. 152.
Megabyzus besieges the Athenians and Egyptians in Prosopitis, ii. 139. 156.
Megabyzus advocates the establishment of an oligarchy in Persia, i. 325.
Megacles, the Alcmæonid, sacrilege of, i. 236.
Megacles, grandson of the Alcmæonid, leader of the Attic sea-coast men, i. 249; marries his daughter to Pisistratus, 251; assists to expel Pisistratus, 253.
Megara, envoys sent to Athens to request an alliance, i. 314; speech of Cimon, *ib.*; speech of Pericles, 317.
Megiddo, ii. 181.
Megistias the seer, i. 345; tomb of, 346.
Melanchlæni, ii. 35.
Melcarth, the Phœnician deity, identified with Heracles. ii. 234; magnificent temple of, at Tyre, 235.
Melian nymphs, i. 28.
Melicertes, i. 365.
Melissa, i. 76; attracts Herodotus, 90.
Melliren, the Spartan, i. 138.
Memory, draught of, i. 219.
Memphis, tradition of its foundation, ii. 156; magnificent temple of Pthah, 157; taken by Cambyses, 189; by Megabyzus, 156.
Memnonium, ii. 199.
Menelaus, i. 131, ii. 62.
Menes, founded the city of Memphis, ii. 157; builds the great temple of Pthah, 158; reign of, 161.
Menkahre. See Mycerinus.
Merdasht, plain of, ii. 345.
Merodach-Baladan, ii. 293.
Meroe, ii. 222.
Messenians, i. 131.
Messiah, promise of, ii. 365.
Metanira, ii. 90.
Metapontum, founding of, ii. 110.
Metempsychosis, doctrine of, taught by Pythagoras, ii. 107; Egyptian dogma of, 203.
Metis, the mind of the world, Orphic idea concerning, ii. 111.
Midas, throne of, i. 209; gardens of, 352.
Milesian wool, i. 19.
Millo, ii. 380.
Milo, the athlete, i. 192, ii. 338.
Miltiades the elder, story of his becoming tyrant of the Chersonesus, i. 360.
Miltiades the younger, i. 17; becomes tyrant of the Chersonesus, i. 363; opposition to Persia, 364; escapes to Athens and obtains the command at Marathon, *ib.*; death in exile, 273, 274; his advice to the Ionians respecting the Ister bridge, ii. 31.
Minyans, descended from Argonaut fathers and Lemnian mothers, ii. 128; hospitably received by the Spartans, *ib.*; part migrate to Elis and part to Thera, 130.
Mitradates, story of his preservation of the infant Cyrus, ii. 298.
Mitylene, ii. 274.
Mnemosyne, fountain of, i. 219.
Muesicles, ii. 419.
Mœris, lake, description of, ii. 196.
Mœris enlarged the temple of Pthah, ii. 158. 161.
Mole at Samos, i. 56.
Moloch, temple of, i. 112; Phœnician worship of, ii. 235.
Money, coining of, invented by the Lydians ii. 276.
Money standard debased by Solon, i. 243.
Money-changers at Athens, i. 290.
Monolith at Sais, ii. 142.

Moon, Sabæan worship of, ii. 312.
Mophi, ii. 220.
Mordecai, story of, 369.
Moriah, ii. 380, 381.
Mortgage pillars in Attica, i. 242.
Mother, the Great. See Cybele.
Mourghab, plain of, ii. 345.
Mouse, the symbol of slaughter, ii. 159.
Munychia, hill of, i. 229; harbour of, 230.
Musæus, oracles of, ii. 111.
Muses, their inspiration, i. 30; bury Orpheus at the foot of Olympus, ii. 108; worshipped by the Pythagoreans, 109.
Museum, the, i. 230.
Music, Greek, i. 24.
Mycale, i. 273.
Mycenæ, ancient city of, i. 117; depopulated by the Argives, *ib.*; legends of the ancient bloody tragedies at, ii. 61; its mythical glories transferred by Æschylus to Argos, 63.
Mycerinus, story of his daughter, ii. 170; the oracle from Buto, 171; his pyramid, *ib.*; discovery of his mummy case, 173; his bones in the British Museum, *ib.*
Myron, the proxenus, i. 164.
Myrtle market at Athens, i. 286.
Mysia, ii. 258.
Mystæ, ii. 87.
Mysteries of Eleusis, 87. 93; character of the Greek mysteries generally, ii. 103; their influence, 104.
Mysteries of Osiris, ii. 143.
Mythology, Greek, i. 25, ii. 98. 431; Thracian, i. 358; Scythian, ii. 8; Egyptian, 200; Persian, 313. 358; review of ancient idolatry, 312; its presumed origin, 364.

Nabonassar, era of, ii. 293.
Naiads, i. 21.
Nasamones, their expedition through the Sahara desert, ii. 237.
Naucrary, i. 234.
Naucratis, the only trading town in Egypt for Greeks, ii. 135. 140; given to the Greeks by Amasis, 185.
Nebuchadnezzar defeats Necho at Carchemish, ii. 181; besieges Tyre, 233; arbitrates between Astyages and Alyattes, 260; royal palace of, at Babylon, 283.
Necho, his canal, ii. 179; circumnavigation of Africa, *ib.*; defeats king Josiah, 180; defeated by Nebuchadnezzar, 181.
Nehemiah, the cup-bearer to Artaxerxes Longimanus, ii. 355; history of, 362; his interviews with Herodotus, 363; informs Herodotus respecting the worship of the true God, 364; returns to Judæa accompanied by Herodotus, 376; his midnight ride round Jerusalem, 381.
Neith, the Egyptian Athena, ii. 140; temple of, at Sais, 141; festival of the Burning Lamps, 143.
Nemea, valley of, ii. 115; lion of, *ib.*
Nemean games, i. 116.
Nemesis, the avenging, visits Polycrates, i. 53; visits Cleomenes and Leotychides, 156; overtakes Cyrus, ii. 45; Solon's observations concerning, 255; visits Crœsus, 256; feared by Herodotus, 384; development of the idea of, 399. 402.
Nephele, legend of, i. 365.
Nereids, i. 21.
Neuri occupying Poland, ii. 35.
Nicandra, ii. 206.
Nicias of Corinth, his character, i. 92.
Niger, river, ii. 228.
Nike Apteros, temple of, ii. 419.
Nile, river, ii. 135; yearly inundations of, 136; formed the Delta, 149; navigators of, 152; two channels of, 157; Herodotus's inquiries concerning its inundations, 216; theory of Thales concerning the cause of its overflow, 217; theory of Hecatæus, *ib.*; a third theory, 218; Herodotus's own theory, 219; true cause, *ib.*; ridiculous story concerning its sources, 220; geographical survey of the countries on the Upper Nile, 221; Herodotus's idea of its course, 227.
Nile boats, description of, ii. 195.
Nile paper, i. 22.
Nimrod founded the empires of Babylon and Nineveh, ii. 290.
Nimrod's tower, ii. 284.
Nineveh founded by Nimrod, ii. 290; mission of Jonah, 291; taken by Arbaces and Belesis, *ib.*; taken by the Medes, 293. 296.
Ninus, ii. 290.
Nisroch, temple of, ii. 293.
Nitetis, story of, ii. 187.
Nitocris, the Egyptian, extraordinary feat of, ii. 161.
Nitocris, the Babylonian, her bridge over the Euphrates, ii. 283; beautified Babylon, 285; her sepulchre, 286.
Nursery stories amongst the Greeks, i. 20.
Nurses, Spartan, celebrated throughout Greece, i. 137.
Nymphs, description of, i. 21.
Nymphs at the festival of Dionysus, ii. 50.

Obelisks at Sais, ii. 143; dedicated at Heliopolis by Pheron, 147.
Oblivion, draught of, i. 219.
Ocean, river, supposed by the Greeks to surround the earth, i. 147, ii. 217.
Oceanids, i. 21, ii. 89.
Octamasades, the Scythian, beheads his brother Scylas, ii. 22.
Odeium, the, ii. 418.
Œnyssæ islands, i. 106.
Olbia, i. 334; Herodotus's residence there, ii. 5; splendid palace of the Scythian king, 20; commerce of, 38.
Olives, mount of, Herodotus's meditations on, ii. 381.
Olorus, i. 364.
Olympia, appearance of the valley of, i. 179; moonlight view, 185; oracle of Zeus at, mode of revealing it, ii. 207.
Olympic games, i. 181; history of, 182; splendour and importance, 183.
Olympus, mount, i. 60. 347.
Olympus, mountain in Mysia, ii. 259.
Omens, Egyptian, ii. 201.
Omphalos, ii. 72.
On, or Heliopolis, ii. 147.
Onomacritus, ii. 111.
Onyxes, ii. 351.
Ophir, ii. 233.
Opisthodomus, i. 306.
Oracles. See Delphi, Lebadea, Branchidæ, &c.
Oracles, Egyptian, ii. 201.
Orbelus, mount, i. 359.
Orchestra in the Greek theatre, ii. 57.

Orchomenus, legend connected with the family of Æolids, i. 365.
Oreads, i. 21.
Oresteia, Æschylus's trilogy of, ii. 54; legends connected with the subject, 61; construction and arrangement of, 63; representation of the Agamemnon, *ib.*; representation of the Choephoræ, 67; representation of the Eumenides, 71; gains the prize, 80.
Orestes, story of the discovery of his bones in Arcadia, i. 127; his appearance in the Oresteia of Æschylus, ii. 67.
Orgies, religious, connected with the worship of Dionysus and Demeter, ii. 105. See Dionysus and Demeter.
Oritheia and Boreas, legend of, i. 301.
Ormuzd, the origin of light and goodness, ii. 313; doctrines of Zoroaster concerning, *ib.*; promulgation of the Magian religion by Ormuzd, 315; heresies, *ib.*; invocation of, 349; final triumph of his kingdom, 361.
Oroetes compasses the death of Polycrates, i. 53.
Orotal, ii. 231.
Orpheus, associations of the followers of, ii. 107; legendary account of, *ib.*; legend of his wife Eurydice, 108.
Orphic societies, ii. 107; theogony compared with the Hesiodic, 111; doctrines borrowed from Egypt, ii. 204, 205.
Osiris, tomb of, ii. 140. 143; mysteries of, 143; image of, carried round at Egyptian banquets, 153; his manifestation in Apis, 193; worship of, 202; Egyptian conceptions concerning him, 203; his resemblance to Dionysus Zagreus, 205.
Ossa, mount, i. 347.
Ostracism, i. 265.
Otanes advocates a democracy, i. 324; discovers the imposture of Smerdis Magus, ii. 324; conspiracy of the Seven, 325; gives up all claim to the government, 329.
Otter hunters, ii. 39.

Pactolus, river, ii. 275.
Pactyas, revolt of, ii. 271; flies to Cymæ, 273; answer of the oracle of Branchidæ concerning, *ib.*; sent by the Cymæans to Mitylene and Chios, 274; delivered up to the Persians, *ib.*
Pæans, i. 42.
Pædagogue, Greek, i. 22; story of, 41.
Pæonians, i. 356.
Painting, art of, amongst the Greeks, i. 86.
Palæstra, i. 25. 169.
Palestine, ii. 231.
Pallas Athena, temple of, represented in the play of the Eumenides, ii. 73.
Pallene, i. 254.
Pan, antiquity of, ii. 208.
Panathenæa, the Great, festival of, ii. 81.
Pancratium, i. 193.
Panathenaicum, i. 284.
Panites, his suggestion respecting twins, i. 132.
Panionium, i. 16.
Papraces, i. 359.
Papremis, temple of Ares at, ii. 144.
Papyrus paper, i. 22; used as food by the Egyptian marshmen, ii. 152.
Paralatæ, ii. 23.
Paris carried off Helen, i. 131, ii. 62.
Parnassus, mount, i. 205.
Parsees, or modern fire-worshippers, ii. 314.
Parthenon, description of, ii. 421.
Pasargada, situation of, ii. 341; visited by Herodotus, 359; greatly reverenced by the Persians, 361.
Pasht, the Egyptian Artemis, temple of, at Buto, ii. 144; splendid temple and festival of, at Bubastis, 146.
Patizeithes, rebellion of, ii. 319; his death, 327.
Pausanias, his treason, i. 278.
Peiraic gate of Athens, i. 284.
Pelasgian deities, ii. 208.
Pelasgians, i. 181.
Pelasgians in Lemnos, ii. 128.
Pelops, legend of, ii. 61.
Peloponnesus, description of, i. 114; conquered by the Dorians, i. 131.
Peloponnesian war, i. 7.
Peneus, river, i. 347.
Pentathlum, i. 182.
Pentelicus, mount, i. 230.
Peplos, the, ii. 86.
Percalus, i. 154.
Perdiccas, legend of his conquest of Macedonia, i. 349.
Perfume of roses, crocuses, &c., i. 283.
Periacti, their employment in the Greek theatre, ii. 57. 73.
Perialla, i. 155, 156.
Periander, tyrant of Corinth, story of his son Lycophron, i. 80.
Pericles, leader of the young Athens party, 311; speech at the pnyx, 317; his adornment of Athens, ii. 411.
Pericœi, i. 132. 135; support the helot rebellion, i. 164.
Persephone, legend of, ii. 88; a Chthonian deity, 103; her rule in the under world, 105.
Persepolis, situation of, ii. 344; remains of, 345; visited by Herodotus, 346; ancient appearance of, *ib.*; presents on the royal birthday, 350; royal banquet, 352.
Perseus, founder of Myceuæ, i. 117.
Persians, ancient history and condition of, ii. 296; conquered by Phraortes, *ib.*; induced by Cyrus to revolt from the Medes, 303; establishment of the Medo-Persian empire, 306; reign of Cyrus, 306; Cambyses, 311; Smerdis, 323; Darius Hystaspis, 329; Xerxes, 339; Artaxerxes, 443; Persian heralds thrown into a well, i. 151. 173; envoys massacred in Macedonia, 353; thinness of the Persian skull, ii. 146; Persian post, 278; religion, 313. 316. 358; costume, 340; banquets, 352; manners and national character, 355.
Pnædima, ii. 324.
Phædra, early engaged to Herodotus, i. 33. 38, ii. 51, 52. 237; the betrothal, 244; the wedding, 246; her death, 385.
Phaethon, story of, i. 111.
Phalerum, harbour of, i. 230. 257.
Phanes, story of, ii. 188.
Phanes, the light of the universe, Orphic idea concerning, ii. 111.
Pharaohs, palace and burial-place of, ii. 140. 142. 157.
Pharaoh Hophra. See Apries.
Pharaoh Necho. See Necho.
Pheron, extraordinary stories of, ii. 147.
Phidias, the Æschylus of statuary, i. 86;

his great works at Athens, ii. 416; his statue of Athena Parthenos of gold and ivory, 422.
Philosophers, Greek, i. 61; Ionian, their theories concerning the inundations of the Nile, ii. 217.
Philistines, ii. 230.
Phocæan captain, yarns of, i. 105.
Phocæans, their early voyages, i. 105; migrate to Corsica, 106; war with the Carthaginians, *ib.*
Phocians, story of the war with Thessaly, i. 212.
Phœbus Apollo, ii. 75.
Phœnice, ii. 121, 122.
Phœnicians, story of their carrying off Io from Argos, i. 119; show their superior skill at Athos, 349; assist in the construction of the Hellespontine bridges, 367; circumnavigate Africa, ii. 179; history of the Phœnicians, 232; worship of Melcarth, or Heracles, 234; manufactories, *ibid.*
Phœnix, picture of, in the temple of Helios, ii. 148; legendary account of, *ib.*
Phoroneus, tomb of, i. 118.
Phraortes, reign of, ii. 295.
Phrixus, legend of, i. 365.
Phronima, story of, ii. 131.
Phrygian worship of Cybele, ii. 106.
Phrynichus, his pathetic tragedy on the capture of Miletus, ii. 59.
Phya, her personation of Athena, i. 253.
Pylacus, the hero, i. 208.
Phylarchus, captain, i. 67. 74; entertains Herodotus at the Golden Fleece, 100; meeting with Herodotus at Olympia, 201; visits Delphi with him, 206; consults the oracle of Trophonius, 216; consults the oracle at Delphi, 222; his young wife, 328; prepares for a voyage to Scythia, 334; lands at Olbia, ii. 6; returns to Byzantium, 16; returns to Athens, 48; preparations for a voyage to Egypt, 117; discourse with Euphorion concerning the melancholy of Herodotus, 118; address to his seamen during a storm, 125; stays at Apollonia, 126; proceeds to Egypt, 134; meets Herodotus at Halicarnassus, 397; hospitality to Herodotus at Athens, 414.
Pigeons, white, expelled by the Persians, ii. 359.
Pillars erected by Heracles, i. 109, ii. 23.
Pindar, i. 44; address to the Olympic victor, 198; his ideas of the mysteries of Eleusis, and the state of the soul after death, ii. 104, 105.
Pindus, mount, i. 230.
Piper and the fishes, story of, ii. 307.
Piræus, i. 229; fortification of, 278; description of, 281; Herodotus's landing, *ib.*
Pirates, Italian, i. 107.
Piromis, ii. 209.
Pisindelis, tyrant of Halicarnassus, i. 35. 38, ii. 237; his death, 249. 251.
Pisistratus, his birth, i. 248; obtains a body-guard, 249; becomes tyrant of Athens, 250; first exile, 251; brought back by the goddess Athena, 252; second exile, 253; obtains the tyranny a third time, 254; death, *ib.*
Pisistratids publish the Homeric poems, i. 45. 258; their public library, 258; final expulsion from Athens, *ib.*
Pitch wells at Zacynthus, i. 204.
Planets, worship of, ii. 312.
Platæa, i. 8; battle of, 17. 273.
Platea, Libyan island of, ii. 131.
Pleistus, river, i. 205.
Plistarchus, i. 158. 161.
Pluto, or Hades, i. 30; judge of mortals, ii. 74; legend of his marriage with Persephone, 89; a Chthonian god, 103; permits Eurydice to leave Hades, 108.
Pnyx, i. 5; at Athens, 232; popular assembly at, 313; opening speech of the epistates, *ib.*
Polycrates, tyrant of Samos, extraordinary career of, i. 52; his death, 54.
Polydectes, i. 133.
Polydorus, son of Glaucus, i. 73, ii. 415.
Polygnotus, the Michael Angelo of antiquity, i. 87.
Ponticon, ii. 40.
Popular Assembly established by Solon, i. 245.
Poseidon worshipped by the Ionians, i. 16; his powers, 30; his contest with Athena, 304; temple of, at Tænarum, 166.
Post, Persian system of, ii. 278.
Potameids, i. 21.
Prasias, lake, amphibious people of, i. 359.
Prexaspes commanded by Cambyses to kill Smerdis, ii. 318; his son shot by Cambyses, 319; his last speech, and suicide, 327.
Priam, a vassal of Assyria, ii. 291.
Priests, Egyptian, dress of, ii. 137; shaved their heads, *ib.*
Priest caste in Egypt, ii. 149.
Procles, i. 132.
Promenia, ii. 206.
Prometheus, the Titan, torch-race in honour of, ii. 83.
Pronaos, i. 306.
Propylæa of the Acropolis, description of, i. 303, ii. 419, 420.
Propylæa of Egyptian temples, ii. 141.
Prosopitis blockaded by Megabyzus, ii. 139.
Proteus, number of the chorus in, ii. 58; representation of, 79.
Proxenus, or consul, i. 93, and *note.*
Prytanes, Athenian, i. 263.
Prytaneum, i. 5; Athenian, description of, 292.
Psammenitus, reign of, ii. 189; pathetic story of, *ib.*
Psammetichus, son of Periander, i. 81.
Psammetichus establishes the caste of Egyptian interpreters, ii. 151; built the court for Apis, 158; infringes the laws of the dodecarchs, 178; becomes sole king of Egypt, 179; story of his sounding the sources of the Nile, 220.
Pteria, battle of, ii. 261.
Pthah, magnificent temple of, at Memphis, ii. 157; priests of, 160; character of the deity, 202.
Pugilism, Spartan, i. 169; at Olympia, 193.
Pul, king of Assyria, ii. 292.
Purim, feast of, ii. 376.
Purifying rites amongst the Greeks, ii. 75. 76. 257, 258.
Pylades, ii. 67. 69.
Pyramid of Cheops, ii. 168; of Chephren, 170; of Mycerinus, 171; of Asychis, 174.
Pyramid-building kings, stories of, ii. 166.
Pyramids of Gizeh, ii. 159.
Pyrenean mountains, i. 109.

Pythagoras, life and teachings of, ii. 106; inspired by Apollo, 107; his doctrines borrowed from Egypt, 204; tradition concerning his slave Zalmoxis, i. 371.
Python, i. 68.

Quail fighting, i. 90.

Ra, the Egyptian Helios, ii. 147.
Ransom, usual rate of, i. 121.
Redeemer, province of, ii. 364.
Reformation, general, in the sixth century before Christ, ii. 114.
Rehoboam, ii. 175.
Religion. See Mythology.
Resurrection of the dead, believed in by the Persians, ii. 361.
Retail dealing, first practised by the Lydians, ii. 276.
Rhampsinitus, ii. 158; extraordinary story of his treasury, 162; his descent into Hades, 166.
Rhapsodists, Greek, i. 43.
Rhea, i. 28, ii. 106.
Rhœcus of Samos, i. 58. 84.
Riblah, ii. 181.
Rivers, venerated by the Persians, ii. 359.
Roses, perfume of, i. 283.
Running-matches at Olympia, i. 190.

Sabacon, the Ethiopian, ii. 176; strange story of, *ib.*
Sabæan idolatry, or worship of images, ii. 312; gradual spread and development of, *ib.*
Sacrifices, Greek, i. 4. 188; Scythian, ii. 8, 9. 15; Egyptian, 214; Hebrew, 215; Babylonian, 284; Persian, 342. 349.
Sahara, desert of, explored by some Nasamones, ii. 227.
Sais, the chief seat of the worship of Neith, ii. 140; magnificent Egyptian temple, *ib.*; tomb of Osiris, 143; festival of the Burning Lamps, *ib.*; hollow image of a cow containing the daughter of Mycerinus, 170.
Salamis, i. 17. 273. 276.
Salutations, Greek, ii. 138; Egyptian, *ib.*; Persian, 355.
Salmacis, spring of, i. 15.
Salmone, cape, ii. 120.
Samaritans, ii. 353.
Samos, history of, i. 52; wonders of, 56, 57.
Sandanis, his advice to Crœsus, ii. 263.
Sandoces, story of, ii. 357.
Sappho, i. 44. 60.
Sardanapalus, robbery of his treasure, ii. 197; his extraordinary death, 291. 292.
Sardis, ii. 251; taken by Cyrus, 265; appearance of, 275.
Satirical drama, ii. 53; becomes separate from the tragedy, 55; representation of the Proteus, 79.
Satyrs, i. 21; at the festival of Dionysus, ii. 50; chorus of, 55; chorus of, in the Proteus, 80.
Saulius, king of Scythia, ii. 19; kills his brother Anacharsis, 20.
Sauromatæ, descended from Scythian fathers and Amazon mothers, ii. 36.
Scalping amongst the Scythians, ii. 10.
Scamander, river, ii. 75.
Scapegoat of the Hebrews, ii. 215.
Scene in the Greek theatre, ii. 57; in the Agamemnon, 63; in the Choephoræ, 67; in the Eumenides, 71. 73.
School, Greek, i. 22.
Scoloti, ii. 23.
Sculpture, Greek, history of the art, i. 83; coloured, 84.
Scylas, king of Scythia, his fatal fondness for the Greeks, ii. 20; initiated into the mysteries of Dionysus, 21; deposed, 22; beheaded by his brother Octamasades, *ib.*
Scylax of Caryanda, exploring expedition of, ii. 333.
Scylla and Glaucus, story of, i. 21.
Scythes, ii. 24.
Scythians of southern Russia and the Crimea, i. 331. 361, ii. 1; their Mongolian origin, *ib.*; description of their country, 2; ancient history, *ib.*; migration to southern Russia, and expulsion of the Cimmerians, 3; invasion of Media, 4; return to Europe, 5; war with their own slaves, *ib.*; Herodotus lands at Olbia, *ib.*; first impressions of the Scythian people, 6; Scythian religion, 8; human sacrifices to Ares, 9; ferocious war customs, *ib.*; scalping, 10; mode of making contracts, *ib.*; soothsayers, 11; funeral rites, 12; intoxicating vapour baths, 14; severity of the Scythian winter, 17; hatred of foreign customs, 19; tradition of their origin, 22; Hellenic tradition, 23; invasion of Darius Hystaspis, 25; plan of operations, 27; pray the Ionians to destroy the Danube bridge, 28; their presents to Darius, 29; retreat of the Persians, 30; Scythian opinion of the Ionians, 32; population of Scythia, 34; extraordinary cauldron of arrow heads at Exampæus, 35; surrounding nations, *ib.*; invasion of Media, 296.
Sea-nymph seen by a Samian skipper, i. 13.
Segeium, i. 271.
Seisachthea, or "shaking off of burdens," i. 242.
Selene, the moon, i. 30.
Semiramis erects mounds along the Euphrates, ii. 279; early exploits, 290.
Senate of Four Hundred, established by Solon, i. 245.
Senate of Five Hundred, constitution of, i. 263.
Sennacherib, his invasion of Egypt, ii. 176; Egyptian tradition concerning, 177; his boastful letter to Hezekiah, *ib.*; destruction of his army, 159. 178; assassinated, 292, 293.
Sepulchres, crystal, ii. 225.
Serpent, the old, machinations of, ii. 364.
Serpent, guardian of the Athenian Acropolis, i. 303.
Serpents, extraordinary prodigy of, ii. 264.
Serpents, winged, i. 298.
Sesostris, ii. 158; conquests of, 161; traditions concerning, *ib.*; monument of, in Ionia, 277.
Sethon, ii. 159; the priest-king of Egypt, 176; invasion of Sennacherib, 177.
Shallum, ii. 181.
Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, ii. 292.
Shepherd kings, account of, ii. 167.
Shishak, ii. 155.
Shushan. See Susa.

Sidon, ii. 232.
Siksak, the, ii. 226.
Silenus taken in the gardens of Midas, i. 352.
Silphium, i. 12, ii. 126.
Silver race of mankind, ii. 101.
Silver mines at Laurium, i. 230. 275.
Simonides, his inscription over the tomb of Megistias, i. 346.
Sindians of Circassia, ii. 17.
Sinope, ii. 3.
Sitalces, king of Thrace, ii. 22.
Siwah, ii. 191.
Skulls, Egyptian and Persian compared, ii. 146.
Skulls used by the Scythians as drinking-cups, ii. 9.
Smerdis, brother of Cambyses, story of, ii. 317; personated by a Magian, 319.
Smerdis Magus seizes the sovereignty of Persia, ii. 319; reign of, 323; discovery of the imposture, 324; conspiracy of the Seven, 325; last speech and suicide of Prexaspes, 326; his death, 327.
Smoke, intoxicating, ii. 14.
Soldiers, Egyptian caste of, ii. 150.
Solomon, ii. 232.
Solon persuades the Alcmæonids to give themselves up to trial, i. 237; life of, 241; called in as a legislator to the Athenians, 242; his three measures, *ib.*; re-classification of the Athenian people, 244; laws of Solon, 245; his voluntary exile, 247; opposition to Pisistratus, 249; death, 250; his visit to the court of Crœsus, ii. 253; his stories and discourses on happiness, *ib.*
Songs, choral, ii. 55.
Soothsayers, Scythian, ii. 11.
Sophist, an Athenian, i. 299.
Sophocles, ii. 418.
Sosicles, the Corinthian, speech of, i. 271.
Spargapises, ii. 44, 45.
Sparta, i. 3. 7; ancient struggle with Argos, 119; famous battle of three hundred Spartans and three hundred Argives, 124; war with Tegea in Arcadia, 126; story of the discovery of the bones of Orestes, 127; conquest of Tegea, 129; situation of Sparta, 130; her ancient inhabitants, 131; story of the twin princes and origin of the double monarchy, 132; life of Lycurgus, 133; his reforms, 134; Spartan citizens formed into a military brotherhood, 136; trade forbidden, *ib.*; iron money, *ib.*; public meals, 437; black broth, *ib.*; military training of boys, *ib.*; peculiar privileges of the Spartan ladies, 139; Spartan heroines, 141; Spartan marriages, 142; punishment of old bachelors, *ib.*; immunities enjoyed by fathers of large families, *ib.*; history of Sparta, 144; visit of Herodotus, 162; earthquake and helot rebellion, 165; roughness of the Spartans, 167; commanded by the oracle at Delphi to liberate Athens from the Pisistratids, 257; unsuccessful attempt of Cleomenes to make Isagoras tyrant of Athens, 267; renewed attempt defeated by the desertion of the allies, 269; discovery of the corrupt practices of the Alcmæonids at Delphi, 270; attempt to restore Hippias, but defeated by the opposition of the allies, 271; oppose the rebuilding of the walls of Athens, 277; overreached by Themistocles, *ib.*; receive the Minyans from Lemnos, ii. 129; receive envoys from Crœsus, 261; story of their present to him, *ib.*
Sperthias and Bulis, story of, i. 174.
Sphinxes, Egyptian, avenue of, ii. 141.
Sporades, or scattered islands, ii. 130.
Stadium at Olympia, i. 186. 190.
Stage, Greek, ii. 57; stage machinery, *ib.*
Statuary, Greek, history of the art, i. 83.
Staves, Babylonian, ii. 281.
Stenyclerus, i. 131.
Stesagoras, i. 362.
Steersmen, Egyptian caste of, ii. 152.
Storm at sea, ii. 123.
Strategi, Athenian, i. 264.
Strymon, river, i. 356.
Stylus, Greek, i. 22.
Stymphalian lake, i. 120.
Styrax, i. 298.
Sun worshipped by the Massagetæ, ii. 43; theory respecting its being blown about by Boreas, 219; table of the sun, 224; Sabæan worship of the sun, 312; Magian worship of, 313; chariot and horses of, 341. See Helios.
Sunium, cape, i. 229. 341.
usa visited by Herodotus, ii. 344.
Suttees amongst the Thracians, i. 358.
Swine, abstained from by the Scythians, ii. 9; blood of, used in the Greek rites of purification, 75. 258; regarded as impure by the Egyptians, 138; employed by Egyptian farmers, 140; offered to Osiris, 151.
Swineherds, Egyptian caste of, ii. 151.
Sybaris, plain of, i. 2; history of, 3; war with Crotona, *ib.*; Sybarites welcome the colonists from Athens, *ib.*; quarrel with the Thurians, 8.
Syene, ii. 136.
Syennesis, ii. 260.
Syloson and the scarlet cloak, story of, i. 55.
Symposiarch, i. 96.
Symposium at Corinth, i. 92; at Athens, 297.
Syrians of Palestine, ii. 231.
Syrtis, the, i. 20, ii. 126.
Syssitia, or public mess, at Sparta, i. 136. 163.

Tabalus, ii. 271.
Table of the sun, ii. 224.
Tablets, Greek, i. 22.
Tabor, mount, ii. 378.
Tachompso, ii. 222.
Tænarum, statue of Arion at, i. 203.
Takhti-Jemshid, ii. 345.
Talthybius, legend of, i. 173.
Tarentum, gulf, i. 2.
Tarentum visited by Persian spies, ii. 337.
Targitaus, the first Scythian, national tradition of his three sons, ii. 22.
Tartarus, i. 27, ii. 109.
Tartary, nomad hordes of, in the army of Xerxes, ii. 340.
Tartessus, i. 12, 305.
Tarshish, ii. 233.
Tattooing amongst the Thracians, i. 357.
Tauri of the Crimea, bloodthirsty wreckers, ii. 15; human sacrifices to, *ib.*
Taygetus, i. 137, ii. 128.

Tegea. in Arcadia, Herodotus's stay there, i. 124; ancient war with Sparta, 126; story of the discovery of the bones of Orestes, 127.
Telesarchus, i. 55.
Tellias the seer, i. 212.
Tellus the Athenian, story of, ii. 253.
Telmessus, diviners of, ii. 264.
Tempe, valley of, i. 347.
Temenus, i. 306.
Temenus, king of Argos, i. 350; legend of the conquest of Macedonia by his descendants, *ib.*
Temple, Greek, arrangement of, i. 306; Egyptian, ii. 141; first instituted in Egypt, 200.
Ten Tribes, dispersion of, its effect on the heathen world, ii. 114.
Terpander, i. 60.
Tetralogy, ii. 53.
Thales, i. 61; his theory concerning the Nile, ii. 217; canal of, 253.
Thasos, gold mines of, i. 359.
Theagenes, i. 236.
Theasides, i. 158.
Theatre of Dionysus, at Athens, i. 302.
Theatre, Greek, origin and character of the ancient drama, ii. 54; its connexion with religious worship, 56; structure and arrangement of the ancient theatre, *ib.*; the stage machinery, 57; the actors and chorus, 58; price of admission, 60; representation of the Oresteia, 63.
Thebes visited by Herodotus, ii. 199.
Thebes, priests of, show Herodotus the piromis, ii. 209.
Themis, i. 69.
Themistocles, i. 273; character of, 274; his policy, 275; overreaches Sparta, 277; his treason and death, 279.
Theodorus, brother of Herodotus, ii. 346.
Theodorus of Samos, i. 18. 53. 84. 210; reception of Herodotus, 56.
Theori, i. 183.
Thera colonised by Theras, ii. 130; Theræans commanded by the oracle at Delphi to colonise Libya, *ib.*
Theras colonises Thera, ii. 129.
Thermopylæ, i. 17; pass of, visited by Herodotus, 341; history and description of the battle, 342; inscriptions at, 346.
Theron, ode of consolation to, ii. 104.
Theseus, i. 233; his division of the people of Attica, 235; temple of, at Athens, 229. 306.
Thespis transforms the chorus into a drama, ii. 55.
Thessaly i. 341. 347.
Thessalians, story of their war with the Phocians, i. 212.
Thestes, ii. 133.
Thornax, mount, gold statue of Apollo on, i. 171, ii. 261.
Thoth, the Egyptian Thermes, ii. 204.
Thrace, geography of, i. 335. 356.
Thracians, i. 254; savage character, 357; manners and customs of, *ib.*; oracle of Dionysus, 358; belief in the immortality of the soul, 370, 371.
Threnes, ii. 104.
Threnos, i. 42.
Thuria, spring of, i. 4.
Thurium, establishment of the colony of, i. 4; disputes between the Athenian and Spartan Thurians, 9; Herodotus's residence there, ii. 398.
Thyestes, legend of, ii. 61.
Thymele, ii. 58. 64.
Thyrea, i. 123.
Thyrsus, ii. 49.
Thyssagetæ, ii. 40.
Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, ii. 292.
Tilones, i. 359.
Timarete, ii. 206.
Timbuctoo, ii. 228.
Timnes, the Scythian commissioner, his information to Herodotus, ii. 7; goes with Herodotus to Byzantium, 18; his character, *ib.*
Timocracy of Solon, i. 244.
Tin islands, i. 298.
Tirhakah, Ethiopian dynasty of, ii. 176; advances to repel Sennacherib, 177.
Titanides, i. 28.
Titans, i. 28; defeated by Zeus, 29; liberated from Tartarus, ii. 109; efforts to destroy Dionysus Zagreus, 113.
Tmolus, mount, ii. 275.
Tomyris, queen of the Massagetæ, her proposals to Cyrus, ii. 43; defeats Cyrus, 45.
Tophet, ii. 381.
Torch-race, ii. 82.
Tower of Babel, ii. 284.
Traders, Egyptian caste of, ii. 151.
Tragedy monopolised by the Athenians, ii. 53; origin and development of, 55; chorus of, *ib.*; peculiar character of ancient tragedy, 56; representation of the Oresteia of Æschylus, 63.
Trapezitæ, or money-changers, i. 290.
Traspies, ii. 23.
Trausi, strange customs of, at births and funerals, i. 358.
Treasury of Atreus, i. 117.
Treasury of Rhampsinitus, story of, ii. 162.
Treton, pass of, i. 115.
Triads, Egyptian, ii. 202.
Trilogy, ii. 53.
Triopium, i. 16.
Triptolemus, ii. 92.
Trireme, i. 9. 81.
Trochilus, ii. 226.
Trophonius, cave and oracle of, 215; consulted by Phylarchus, 218.
Troy, i. 15, 16. 360.
Tumulus of Alyattes, ii. 276.
Typhon, i. 115, ii. 144; curious ceremonies in honour of, 145. 203.
Tyre, its antiquity, ii. 230; history of, 232; visit of Herodotus, 234.
Tyrrhenus, ii. 276.

Undergirding of ships, ii. 123.
Uranus, i. 28.
Urns, funeral, ii. 69. 429.

Valour highly esteemed by the Persians, ii. 356.
Vapour baths, Scythian, ii. 4.
Vases, funeral, ii. 65.
Vashti, story of, ii. 368.
Victory, wingless, temple of, ii. 419.
Vine leaves, extract of, i. 283.
Vows, Egyptian, ii. 211.

War customs of the Scythians, ii. 9.
White Fortress at Memphis, ii. 157.

Willow rods, Scythian mode of divining with, ii. 11.
Wine, trade in, ii. 117. 152
Winged bulls at Persepolis, ii. 347.
Woman, disputation concerning, i. 299.
Wrestling matches at Olympia, i. 193.
Writing, Greek, i. 22; Egyptian, ii. 137. 155.

Xanthus, i. 64.
Xenarchus, i. 288.
Xenocles the choregus, ii 54.
Xerxes, his remark on Artemisia, i. 36; refuses to relieve the Spartans of their crime in murdering the Persian heralds, 175; his alarm at Thermopylæ, 343; canal at Athos, 349; bridges over the Hellespont, 367; scourges the straits, 368; ceremonies on crossing the straits, 369; Xerxes's contest with Artabazanes for the Persian throne, ii. 339; reduces Egypt, *ib.*; prepares for the invasion of Greece, 340; order of his army, *ib.*; review at Abydos, 341; character of the war, 342; his death, 343; hall of, at Persepolis, 348.

Year, the Attic, i. 263, and *note*.

Zacynthus, pitch wells at, i. 204.
Zagreus, Orphic ideas concerning, ii. 112; legend of, 113.
Zalmoxis, a Thracian deity, i. 370; said to have been a slave of Pythagoras, 371; taught the immortality of the soul, *ib.*
Zea, Egyptian, ii. 137.
Zechariah, ii. 233.
Zendavesta, religious ideas set forth in, ii. 313.
Zeresh, ii. 374. 375.
Zerubbabel, ii. 362.
Zeus, sacrifice to, i. 4; birth of, 29; defeats Cronos and the Titans, *ib*; altar to Zeus the Liberator, 57; legend of Zeus and Leto, 68; temple of Zeus at Olympia, 179; sacrifices in, 188; temple of, at Athens, 232. 301; cultus of Zeus Laphystius at Alos, 366; Persephone, daughter of Zeus, ii. 88; legend of her marriage with Pluto, 89; Zeus Chthonios? 103; release of the Titans from Tartarus, 110; Orphic idea concerning Zeus, 112; Zeus Ammon, 191; the Egyptian Zeus, 202. 205; oracles of Zeus at Dodona, Thebes, and Ammonium, 205; mode of revealing his oracles, 206; Zeus the Expiator, 259; representation of Zeus in sculpture, 416.
Zimri, extraordinary death of, ii. 292.
Zion, ii. 380.
Zopyrus mutilates himself for the sake of capturing Babylon, ii. 331.
Zoroaster, ii. 114; doctrines of, 313; restores the pure religion of Ormuzd in opposition to the false religion of Ahriman, 315.

THE END.

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